

THE BOY'S OWN FAVOURITE SERIES



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The Earl of Montrose at the Court of Charles I.—Page 1.

THE FIERY CROSS;

OR,

THE VOW OF MONTROSE.

BY BARBARA HUTTON

(MRS. ALEXANDER),

AUTHOR OF 'CASTLES AND THEIR HEROES,' 'TALES OF THE WHITE COCKADE,'
'HEROES OF THE CRUSADES,' 'TALES OF THE SARACENS,' ETC.

'Oh never shall we know again
A heart so stout and true ;
The olden times have passed away,
And weary are the new.'—AYTOUN.

Illustrations by John Lawson.



New York:

E. P. DUTTON & CO.,

39 WEST TWENTY-THIRD STREET.

LONDON: GRIFFITH AND FARRAN, ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD.

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P R E F A C E.

THINK no apology need be offered for introducing to young readers the well-known but ever new story of the life, battles, and cruel death of the great Marquis of Montrose.

He shines in the history of the time, pre-eminent for chivalrous loyalty and brilliant qualities; and it was well said of him by one of his contemporaries, a French cardinal, 'that he had never known another man so nearly approaching the description given by Plutarch of the heroes of old.'

No nation has surpassed the Scots in examples of heroic military qualities; and not even the adventures of 'bonnie Prince Charlie' thrill us more than the history of Montrose, who was alike the hero and the victim of the dissensions of his period.

In the present prosaic age, when we are apt, in a laudable admiration for great inventive genius, to hide the *romantic* side of life, it may not be unconstructive to the rising generation, that they should also read of the disinterested motives and high aims of the Great Cavalier of the seventeenth century,—a man who for *honour's* sake staked life and fortune, and, in his own words,—

‘— put it to the touch
To gain, or lose it all !’

B. H.

RICHMOND HILL.





THE FIERY CROSS.

CHAPTER I.

‘Though Caesar’s paragon I cannot be,
Yet shall I soar in thought as high as he!’

‘**W**HO is he?’ inquired many a pretty pair of rosy lips, one day in the Palace of Whitehall, as a young and noble-looking cavalier entered and took his place among the courtiers, awaiting the arrival of the King.

The curiosity of the Court ladies was soon satisfied; for just then, the King himself was announced. As Charles, wearing his sad, dignified look, with which his portrait by Velasquez has familiarized us, entered the audience-chamber, the stranger was formally presented.

As he advanced towards the monarch, the ladies

were enabled to gaze upon the young gallant. They saw that his figure was good, and, moreover, that it was well set off, after the fashion of the day, by a richly-embroidered doublet with wide sleeves, falling collar, and lace ruffles ; and that his glossy brown hair flowed loosely over his well-shapen shoulders. They noted, too, that his garments had a slightly foreign cut ; and that his velvets and laces were of more than ordinary costliness. As he bent his head before the King, his handsome face beamed brightly ; and the ladies all observed that his penetrating grey eyes, beneath a fair broad forehead, showed his clear complexion to great advantage. The courtiers murmured with admiration as the gallant walked along the room. But their admiration quickly abated when they saw Charles's reception of the cavalier. The King merely gave him his hand to kiss, and with marked coldness, and without uttering a word, passed on.

A deep crimson flush overspreading the young man's face, testified to the mortification he felt at his reception ; but he soon recovered his composure, and drawing himself proudly up, retired into the back-ground.

It was James Graham, fifth Earl of Montrose, whom Charles the First had thus slighted.

Montrose had just returned from France and

Italy. A more accomplished nobleman had seldom presented himself at the English Court.

As Charles was generally accustomed to graciously receive noble youths such as Montrose, his courtiers were astonished to see him thus rebuff the Earl; but the King had the failing of all the Stuarts—he was influenced by favourites. The Marquis of Hamilton, afraid of the introduction of so accomplished a man as Montrose, had, from the first moment of his arrival in England, intrigued against him. He represented to the King the danger of the young Earl's popularity in Scotland, and so wrought on Charles's weakness as to make him believe that Montrose might prove a dangerous rival in that kingdom, then much disturbed by the Covenanters.

It is easy to sow dissension and mistrust between two generous natures, when the insinuations of the mischief-maker are based on an accurate knowledge of character. Hamilton knew that the King was weak, and Montrose was not hasty. He had previously said all that he could to set Montrose against Charles; and therefore when he was thus publicly slighted, the Earl left Whitehall, secretly determined to retire to Scotland, and not again present himself at Court.

Montrose was at that time just twenty-four years of age. True, there were grave defects in his cha-

racter ; but in his romantic life we shall find many traits of greatness and heroism. In the first place, his youth was a well-spent one, and not idle. His family honours had descended to him when but a mere lad ; and a long line of brave soldiers before him, had bequeathed to the boy, who in 1616 succeeded his father, an hereditary attachment to the house of Stuart.

His youth was passed under the care of his brother-in-law, Lord Napier, who had married one of Montrose's fair sisters. This clever and accomplished nobleman treated the young Earl as a son. The natural bent of the lad's mind to study and research, was carefully cultivated under his guardian's roof. Very little is known of the Earl's boyhood, except that it was passed under Napier's care ; but he must have married young, as he was a husband before he started on his travels. His wife was Lady Magdalene Carnegie, daughter of the first Earl of Southesk. Two sons were born to the pair before the Earl was twenty-one years of age. Of his wife, too, there is little to tell. It is believed that she died soon after her younger son was born, in 1653. Montrose had not been present at the King's coronation, for he was then in France in command of the Scottish Guard. This renowned corps of volunteers were taken over to France to assist Louis

the Thirteenth in his war against Austria. It was composed 'of the bravest company of men that ever' were seen in France, all of them gallant young gentlemen, well appointed.'

The time that the young Earl served with the Scotch gens d'armes is not known, neither is it certain that he saw service in France; but while on his travels, he carefully cultivated all the arts that could advance him in a military career. Till rebuffed by the King, he had longed with all the enthusiasm of his age to support Charles's cause; but the King's reception of him damped his ardour.

Montrose retired to his native land. His return caused much excitement, because it was at first not known which faction he would favour; and his ability and talent would be valuable to either. The Earl sided with the Covenanters, against the King.

The title of Covenanter was the badge of a party. Charles the First, with indiscreet zeal, had tried to force the English form of liturgy and Episcopacy on the Scottish Presbyterians.

Enraged at this attempt, those who belonged to that party drew up a protest, which they named 'The Covenant.' The document bound all who signed it to resist any religious changes and innovations.

There is nothing that will so easily lead men into

bitterness as differences on points of religion. From simply protesting, the Covenanters became rebellious; and, inflamed by party zeal, formed themselves into a large body, requiring every one throughout the land to sign their 'charter.'

It was in the very heat of these agitating events that Montrose reappeared in his native land. In that same summer of 1637, Charles's edict for enforcing the use of the English liturgy in his Scottish kirks was carried out in Edinburgh.

The tumult that ensued was begun by women. The fair sex expressed by knocks and blows their detestation of what the Scotch call 'the Service Book;' and not only disturbed the congregation, but tried to stone the bishop as he stepped from the kirk door into his carriage, and barely escaped.

Resistance to the use of the prayer-book was soon universal in Edinburgh. The men were as violent against it as the women; and many clergymen, rather than obey the royal mandate, submitted to the infliction of heavy fines.

Charles did a foolish thing when he tried to make Calvinistic Scotland adopt Prelacy as her religious system. It seems strange that Mary Stuart's grandson should have been so blind as to forget that, in the eyes of her subjects, the worst sin of that hapless princess was her religion.

Mary's levity and foreign manners might have been forgiven, but her opposition to John Knox was an unpardonable crime ; for the Presbyterians connected Prelacy with Popery.

Their hatred of Popery is very great ; and they maintain that their own form of church government by presbyteries, synods, and general assemblies is alone conformable to Scripture. Episcopalians prefer, on the other hand, church government by bishops ; and James the First had been one of their number.

That pedantic monarch detested the doctrines of Calvin, and had done all that he could to enforce Anglican ritual on the Scotch, but had signally failed. Charles, who was what we in our day should call a 'High Churchman,' foolishly tried to follow in his father's footsteps ; and that course may be said to be one of the reasons of his downfall. The Scotch persisted in believing that Charles's adviser, Laud, when he tried to make them adopt his prayer-book, was aiming a blow at their national independence ; and this feeling led to stirring events in Scotland, in which the Marquis of Montrose was destined to take a striking part.

In the first place he joined the Covenanters. This act was his greatest mistake in life, and various reasons have been given accounting for his taking

such a step. Some historians declare that, piqued by the King's marked coldness to him, the young Marquis was led, by wounded vanity, to oppose his policy. Such an assertion is totally inconsistent with the character of Montrose, which had nothing mean or petty about it ; it is only little minds who give up great principles (and loyalty to his King was one firmly implanted in James Graham's mind) to revenge mere trifling wrongs. Others, again, maintain that the Earl was persuaded to join the Covenanters, by a nobleman,—one of the chief promoters of the scheme,—the Earl of Rothes.

This nobleman has been called the founder of the Covenant. He was much slighted by Charles, who never noticed him at Court, from his resentment at the course that Rothes had adopted from the beginning of his reign, of opposition to the King's Scottish policy.

The friends of Charles the First declare that he intended, in the first instance, to benefit Scotland. Scotland had its Parliament, although its King had left that kingdom to reign over another land. It was an assembly that was very obsequious to Charles, till he incurred the displeasure of its three estates by endeavouring to perform an act of justice—namely, to recover the tithes of the Church from a number of grasping noblemen, who had appropriated most of

the ecclesiastical revenues to their own use at the Reformation.

This design was, it may be said, the beginning of troubles for the Stuarts; for, though many of his loyal subjects in Scotland hailed this endeavour to endow the clergy as a great boon, those noblemen, who were to suffer by the revocation of tithes, were mortally affronted, and, through their influence, the proposal was vehemently opposed.

The principal appropriation of Church tithes took place during James the Sixth's minority, after the Reformation, and was connived at by the Regent Murray. The poor peasant, obliged to pay a tenth to the rich baron of the territory from whom he held land, was often so oppressed by the nobles that he would rebel against the payment, and, rather than submit to it, would leave the whole of his crops ungathered and neglected, to the great detriment of the country.

Then, again, the stipend left for the maintenance of the clergy was miserably small, and all means of educating the poorer classes at a stand-still. Scotland at that time was far behind England in civilisation, although in many ways the character of the nation was as great as that of the English.

In spite of the absence of their hereditary sovereigns, the Scotch were still faithful and true; al-

though, when instigated by their nobles, who were rebellious for their own ends, they often became turbulent and ungovernable. The Highlanders were a totally different race to the Lowlanders, and far more loyal than the men of the plains, who were also inclined to oppose Charles the First, from their hereditary adherence to republican Knox, and their hatred of Episcopacy.

Numerous measures were devised by Charles and his advisers for the revocation of the tithes. Charles sent commissioners into Scotland, but was compelled to treat with the titheholders in 1630, who, although the King granted them many privileges, were much dissatisfied. When he went on a royal progress to Scotland (although joyfully welcomed by many), several noblemen met their monarch with great coldness, and actually intrigued against him.

Every measure proposed by the King in the Scottish Parliament met with opposition by a certain party. Those who thwarted the King became the principal promoters of the Covenant later on, and threw off their disguised loyalty as soon as Charles the First, not wise enough to hide his displeasure from those who offended him, returned to England. The Earl of Rothes was one to whom the King showed great coldness. Lord Balmerino was tried

and condemned to death ; but his trial, for drawing up a seditious petition of a treasonable character, ended in a triumph for the democratic party in Scotland, for he was found guilty by only one vote. Charles the First pardoned him, and his sentence was not carried out ; but the trial did the royal cause great harm, and prepared the way for those who wished to make the introduction into Scotland of Anglican ritual a pretext for rebellion against the King. Montrose had been brought up in Lord Napier's house with an especial dread and horror of Popery, and therefore looked jealously on all measures introduced by Laud as tending to revive what has been, and ever will be, detested in England—priestcraft.

Lord Napier kept aloof from all factions ; but, long before the Balmerino trial, had seen how fatally reliant Charles the First was on the uncompromising counsellors, by whose advice he later thrust a distasteful liturgy on his Scotch subjects.

The Earl of Rothes having persuaded Montrose that the King was bent on turning Scotland into a mere province of England, by taking away her independence, allowed himself to be selected one of four noblemen to represent the lesser barons of Scotland, when inflamed against Charles. The revolutionary party formed themselves into a committee,

which became eventually the government *de facto* of the kingdom.

Charles, finding that his ill-advised attempt to introduce the prayer-book into Scotland had virtually failed, determined to send a royal commissioner to Edinburgh, to represent himself, and try and revive that ancient loyalty to his crown that the attempt to introduce Prelacy had so rudely shaken in the Lowlands of Scotland.

The person selected for this difficult post was the Marquis of Hamilton, the favourite who had persuaded the King to receive Montrose so coldly when he visited Whitehall.

The Marquis's reception was enthusiastic, as he proceeded to Holyrood in his viceregal character, although those noblemen who had signed the Covenant declined to meet him. The Marquis pretended to sympathize deeply with the alleged grievances of the Covenanters; but Rothes, Montrose, and Loudon soon found out that he had no real instructions from Charles to meet their wishes; though such was the craft of the man, he tried to make them believe he would represent all their grievances fairly to the King.

The Marquis then returned to England, and Montrose was charged to try and persuade the men of the north to join the Covenanting party by the time

the Marquis should return to Scotland, in order to present a unanimous front to the King in representing the repugnance of the nation to the contemplated changes.

The Marquis made two journeys to England to see his royal master before any compromise was agreed on with the antagonistical Covenanters. In the meantime, Montrose had tried but failed to induce the inhabitants of Aberdeen to join them.

That city still held out, and adhered to its allegiance to the Church as governed by bishops, and rejected all Montrose's overtures.

At last the Marquis of Hamilton returned again from the south, charged with a proposal from the King that would have been amply sufficient to meet all difficulties, and which tacitly amounted to a withdrawal of all that had offended his Scottish subjects, had the Covenanters really intended only the good of their country.

Montrose, acting as their tool, presented a protestation from the malcontents, refusing all terms, although in his heart the young Earl by no means shared the opinion of the bigoted noblemen, who believed that Episcopacy was an actual sin; but while rebelling against Charles, believed that he was compelled to do so to save his country.

The Marquis of Hamilton's mother was a Cove-

nanter, and his own predilections were by some thought to favour her party ; but his character was a puzzle to all ; for, while writing against the Covenant to Charles, he managed to impress many of the disaffected noblemen with a belief in the good faith with which he listened to their grievances.

In all these dissensions, Montrose's name figures as taking a leading part. He was probably ignorant of the real designs of the leaders of his party, who at length, after demanding a national assembly, threw off the mask, and declared war openly against the King. This was in 1638 ; and Lord Lorn, afterwards famous as the Duke of Argyle, placed himself at the head of the government.

The act of this rebel—for such he really was ; because, however indiscreet King Charles had been, there was no excuse for the Covenanters taking up arms against his government—was (as soon as Hamilton had returned to England) to abolish certain bishoprics, and to pronounce a solemn sentence of excommunication against them, which he and his colleagues ordered every clergyman to read out in his kirk, on pain of incurring the censure of the presbyteries and synods. Long before the outbreak of civil war the Covenanters had been preparing for the struggle. They purchased and laid in military stores,—chiefly bought in Holland and

Germany,—and drilled their followers to the use of the pike and other warlike weapons. They also sent trusty agents abroad to offer commissions to numbers of gentlemen, who, by way of improving their fortunes, had been fighting in the service of foreign princes.

Among the number attracted by the call, was a very brave and clever officer named Alexander Leslie, who had seen much foreign service, and attained the rank of field-marshal in the Swedish army.

The self-constituted Scottish government dismissed a great many clergymen for not signing the Covenant; and most of the leaders of the party declared themselves in favour of completely uprooting Episcopacy from the Scottish constitution by violent measures.

While the Covenanters were thus, under the disguise of religious zeal, planning revolutionary schemes, Charles had made the Marquis of Huntly lieutenant of the north of Scotland, although Hamilton, whose double dealing was now very apparent, did all he could to prevent his success, by withholding supplies both of men and money from the Marquis. Aberdeen remained faithful both to the Church and crown, and the Marquis of Huntly made that royal burgh his chief headquarters. The Highlanders and

the north also remained true to Charles ; and the Covenanting nobles therefore turned their attention to crush any loyal efforts in that direction, before reinforcements could reach Huntly from England.

Montrose was selected for this service.

There is no doubt but that Montrose at this time was heart and soul in the cause of his Covenanting friends. He set off early in March, 1639, for his own home, accompanied by one who was afterwards his bitterest foe, the Duke of Argyle, as well as Alexander Leslie, under whose orders trained bodies of both foot and cavalry were raised, to be ready to follow General Montrose to meet the King's lieutenant, the gallant Marquis of Huntly.

That nobleman well knew the weakness of the undisciplined troops, whom, in face of Leslie's warlike preparations, he had hastily raised from among the clans that were loyal to the King's cause.

He was daily expecting tidings from Charles ; but knowing the weakness of his army (only numbering about two thousand foot and horse) compared to the strength of the Covenanters, Huntly determined to try and gain time by entering into negotiations with Montrose.

Montrose's home was on the river Southesk, where Huntly's envoys found him surrounded by a well-prepared army, and accompanied by Lord Carnegie,

Lord Elcho, and Field-Marshal Leslie (so dignified by the Swedish King), and several other noblemen.

As they drew near Montrose, they passed Montrose's army.

The excellent order that the deputation noted as they passed along among the pikemen and swordsmen, made them only the more anxious to come to terms.

They looked uneasily at each other, as they noted the martial bearing of those determined men, all of whom wore blue scarfs across their breasts, or blue ribbons in their bonnets.

Those blue ribbons were called 'Montrose's whimsies.' In opposition to the 'whimsies,' Huntly's troops wore red ribbons, in token of their fidelity to the King.

Huntly's messengers went sadly back to Aberdeen. They had met with no success in their mission. When they got back to their ancient burgh, they learned, to their great surprise, that during their absence, after disbanding a great many of his soldiers, the Marquis of Huntly had retired to a place called Strabogie.

His departure opened the road peaceably to Montrose. The citizens of Aberdeen were overawed when they saw the gallant general of the Covenanters enter their burgh at the head of a well-dis-

ciplined body of men, preceded by a blue silken banner, on which they read the motto—

‘For Religion, the Covenant, and the Countrie.’

They were compelled to pay a fine, and to submit to the suspension of all public worship according to Episcopal form throughout the city. The citizens of Aberdeen felt themselves in a hard plight. They had stoutly resisted the Covenant, and most of them were Charles’s loyal subjects. Some among them, rather than sign the hated Covenant, even fled by sea to join the King, who at that time was as much plagued by the Puritans in England as he was by the Covenanters in Scotland. But when the citizens found themselves deserted by Huntly, their bishop fled, and Montrose in the city, they felt obliged to do all they could to save the town and their own homes by receiving the enemy without bloodshed.

Making the Earl of Kinghorn governor of Aberdeen, Montrose soon marched off again. He went towards Inverary, hearing that Huntly had encamped there.

The King’s northern lieutenant, like the citizens of Aberdeen, felt himself deserted ; for he received no answers from England to his numerous appeals for aid ; while on every side he heard of the success of the Covenanters.

At last, despairing of receiving aid in time to defeat Montrose, Huntly proposed a personal interview between himself and the Covenanters, to discuss their differences.

Two interviews took place between Huntly and Montrose, each accompanied to the rendezvous by eleven of their friends, unarmed.

Feeling acutely the helplessness of his position as long as he was unsupported by England, Huntly was induced to sign a paper in favour of 'the liberties of Scotland.' He also consented to return with Montrose to the Covenanters' camp, to sign another paper, embodying the stipulations agreed on between them. Huntly went, relying on the Earl's word that he should be free to return.

Although treated most courteously by his enemies, Lord Huntly felt uneasy, when, foremost among Montrose's supporters, he saw his personal foes, the Forbeses and the Frasers. He began to fear betrayal; but as soon as the deed was signed, he was allowed to return unmolested.

Shame to the wearers of 'the broom and the yew,' the Forbeses and Frasers, who sport those mountain emblems as badges of their clan, the gallant Huntly had scarcely quitted their camp, when they reproached Montrose with allowing him to escape. Lords Murray and Seaforth, and the Master of

Lovat, all chimed in, and intrigued to lay a trap for Huntly, by inviting him to another interview.

The gallant Gordon consented to another interview. He did not doubt Montrose's word, but he had soon great reason to regret his misplaced confidence. This passage in Montrose's history is but little to his credit, for it was beneath his noble nature, even in intention, to break a promise.

Huntly being once more in the Covenanters' power, they determined not to let him go. A strict watch was kept over his lodgings; and when at length, his eyes being opened, Huntly indignantly demanded back the paper he had signed, he exclaimed, as he turned to Montrose, 'Am I to accompany you south'—the Earl had told him that he expected him to return to Edinburgh with him—'voluntarily, or as your prisoner?'

'You can make your choice,' said Montrose.

'Then I will go willingly, and not as a prisoner,' replied Huntly.

Whatever reluctance Montrose may have felt to such a treacherous act, the Marquis and his eldest son were carried off a fortnight later (April 1639), when the Covenanters, leaving the Forbeses and Frasers to guard the north, returned to Edinburgh.

In the meantime, King Charles, although distracted by troubles in Edinburgh, had at length

awakened to the knowledge that help must be sent to those gallant Highlanders still faithful to his crown. The Gordons were also wild to revenge the perfidy with which Huntly had been taken. In an encounter between the loyal northern barons and the Forbeses, the former came off victorious; and just as the Covenanters, dismayed at the check they had received, were consulting what was best to be done, they were startled to find a fleet of twenty-nine of the King's ships in the Firth, bringing Hamilton back again as general of the forces.

Once more Montrose, at the head of an army of four thousand men, returned to Aberdeen, charged to attack the loyal barons. He spared the town again, and endeavoured (but ineffectually) to besiege Sir George Gordon of Gight's house, but was thwarted in his design of taking it by its owner's promptness in fortifying it securely before his approach.

Forced to retreat to Aberdeen, Montrose again marched his forces southwards in good order, before Lord Aboyne (who, although a mere lad of nineteen, had been sent to Scotland to take Huntly's post, and had anchored off Aberdeen) had had time to land. Aboyne waited to disembark with the King's troops, in hopes of some further reinforcements that Hamilton had led him to suppose would

eagerly join him. Not only did none press forward to the assistance of Charles's lieutenant in the north, but the Earl of Tullibardine and a chieftain named Glencairn abandoned him when they saw how small a number of adherents flocked round the royal banner. Montrose met and defeated Aboyne, after deeds of great valour on both sides ; and Aberdeen would probably have been entirely destroyed, out of revenge for the loyal assistance it had rendered the King's party, had not Montrose, almost at the very hour in which he contemplated ordering it to be burnt, received the joyful news that between Charles and his rebellious subjects a treaty of peace had been concluded.

This agreement is called in history the Treaty of Berwick.

Tormented by the Puritans in England, and harassed by the want of money, Charles had with great difficulty raised an army to march against his northern subjects.

The Covenanters, under the Earl of Argyle, had seized many of the King's castles. They had fortified Leith, while Montrose, as we know, had organized an attack on the faithful Highlands.

The dread of Episcopacy was strong throughout Scotland ; but even among the Covenanters many a heart beat true and loyally to the unhappy Charles,

now arrived with his army on the borders, just as Montrose had entered Aberdeen. Of this party was our hero's early friend, Lord Napier. He suggested that a commission should be formed to treat with Charles ; and his advice was followed.

The King agreed to receive Rothes, and four of his Covenanting associates of influence at his camp. The interview took place in Lord Arundel's tent. After much debate upon the grievances of his party, Rothes and the King concluded their conference by drawing up a written agreement, which both signed.

The Covenanters agreed to deliver into the King's hands all the castles and fortresses that they had seized. Their troops were to be disbanded, and Huntly and other prisoners to be set free. The King, on the other hand, agreed to certain important concessions, such as a General Assembly to deliberate on the articles of pacification ; and so peace was to be made between the rival factions.

The Marquis of Huntly and his son Lord Gordon, who had been imprisoned in Edinburgh, were set at liberty, and repaired to the King's camp.

The General Assembly, which was to have been followed by a Parliament, was convened, and Charles fulfilled all the promises that he had made to the Scots as faithfully as lay in his power. They, on their side, did all they could to evade compliance

with such articles of the treaty as were repugnant to their republican spirit. Montrose disbanded his troops; but the fact that the hearts of the Presbyterians were far from loyal, received further proofs as Charles's representatives drove through Edinburgh. Women, always foremost in everything of a religious character, threw stones at their coach, and incited quite a tumult when the youthful Aboyne drove through their city.

Most unfortunately for himself, Charles placed full confidence in Hamilton.

We all know what it is to lean on the advice of a friend in whose honour and truth we fully rely; but rarely indeed may a king indulge safely in private friendships. The inequality of rank is sure to lead to favouritism. Hamilton pretended to enter zealously into the King's schemes; but he was at heart a traitor, for he was in secret treaty with the Covenanters.

Charles soon grew disgusted with his Scottish subjects. The chief nobles, whom he invited to his camp, refused, on the most frivolous pretences, to obey his summons; and the King saw his royal proclamations, forbidding public meetings for the purposes of religious agitation, scornfully disregarded by the leaders of the Covenant.

The Earl of Montrose was among the number, who

reluctantly presented himself before his sovereign. They had not met since Charles, instigated by the crafty Hamilton, had so coldly slighted him at Whitehall.

The young nobleman, too honest for the party that looked upon Argyle as their leader, was beginning to distrust his associates. His interview with Charles impressed him powerfully. Did any presentiment cross the young Earl's mind, as he gazed on the troubled brow of his unhappy King, that the time would come when he should breathe a vow in Charles's name, and mount the scaffold rather than break it?

Disgusted and annoyed, the King, instead of opening the Scottish Parliament in person, returned hastily to England; and Montrose—the memory of his sovereign's stately presence and gracious bearing still fresh in his mind—returned to Edinburgh.

The General Assembly that met in August 1639 condemned Prelacy as contrary to the Bible. Not content with this, the leaders of the Covenant, when Parliament met, aimed at destroying the actual prerogatives of the crown, by declaring that all State functions should be exercised by that power.

Montrose pondered long over the perplexing questions of the day. He had unsheathed his sword against his King, believing that the liberties of his

country were endangered ; but he was not prepared to assent to a democratic form of government.

He had the courage to oppose the party who were secretly trying to get the government of Scotland into their own hands. Its leaders began to suspect Montrose. They knit their brows as they heard his honest objections to their schemes ; and it got bruited about that Montrose had been bribed by Charles, when he saw him at Berwick.

One day, Montrose, as he left his room, picked up a paper, which had evidently been purposely left on its threshold. It bore four significant Latin words : *Indictus armis verbis vincitur*. ‘Resistless in war, he was vanquished by words.’

If this secret thrust was intended to dismay the honest Earl, it failed in its purpose. He had joined the Covenanters to oppose a policy which he deemed detrimental to the freedom of the country ; but he came of a race too loyal to sanction or join in the democratic views of such men as Argyle and others, who were beginning openly to affirm, that a Parliament might act as well without as with a king.

The King’s commissioner, Lord Traquair, had been roughly received when he went to open the Scotch Parliament in the name of King Charles, who, finding that the Covenanters were agitating against him,

ordered the session to be dissolved ; but the Covenanters defied the royal message, and carried out their own views in the name of the National Assembly.

In spite of Montrose's views being known as favourable to the monarchy, he was entrusted with a military command, when the Covenanters once more marched a large army under General Leslie towards the English border.

Montrose's heart was very heavy when, suspected by his colleagues, and not quite at ease with the cause for which he once more donned the 'blue whimsies' of the Covenant, he assumed a military command.

Between himself and Argyle especially, there existed mutual distrust and contempt. Argyle despised the Earl's honesty of purpose ; the latter felt supreme scorn of Argyle's crooked policy.

Campbell has been called as crooked in mind as he was sinister in face ; for that celebrated leader of the Covenanters had not been personally gifted by nature. He was short of stature, red-haired, and near-sighted ; yet he had brilliant talents. A great writer of those times has said—'Argyle wanted nothing but honesty and courage to be an extraordinary man.' Montrose, with his lofty bearing, gentle manners, and handsome face, exhibited a

great contrast to the man under whom he worked for the Covenant.

In order to ingratiate himself with the fanatical Presbyterian clergy, Argyle adopted the favourite expressions of the Covenanters. Such hypocrisy was hateful to Montrose.

Archibald Lord Lorn, later Earl and then Marquis of Argyle, came of a lofty lineage and race. We must turn to the annals of one of the most interesting races in the world, the Highlanders of Scotland, for his pedigree.

The Highlanders claim to be descended from the Picts. The Campbells have a legend that their clan are all descended from a Pictish hero, called 'Diar-mad of the wild boar ;' and they take a boar's head as their crest. The common ancestor, however, of the whole of this vast clan, who sport as their badge the fir club moss, and use as their rallying cry in battle the word 'Cruachan,' the name of a mountain in Argyllshire, was a 'Cambel,' or 'Kambel,' who had lands granted him by King Robert Bruce, one Sir Colin. This Sir Colin was Robert Bruce's nephew. His descendants, the 'Caileam Mor' family, became very powerful, and compelled several smaller clans to adopt their name, now one of the commonest in Scotland ; but they principally rose from supplanting the Macdonalds, who have the best

claim to be ranked as the most ancient clan in the Highlands. That ancient race, who say that they are descended from a Pict named Somerled, intermarried with the Lords of Lorn. Between them and the clan of the 'MacCaileam Mor' (a name given to the chieftain of the Campbells, and which means 'Son of the great Colin') a great rivalry always existed.

The Campbell clan in 1715 was reckoned powerful enough to bring 4000 men into the field ; and they were as numerous in 1638, when Archibald Lord Lorn placed himself at the head of the opposition to Charles the First.

Charles the First had highly favoured Lord Lorn. He had made him a privy councillor, and fully trusted him ; yet on all accounts he had done so unwisely.

He who is not true to a father, will never be true to a king. Charles, though accused of favouring the errors of Rome, disliked Papists. The Earl's father had become a Roman Catholic, and by so doing offended the King. With arbitrary power, Charles ordered the old Earl to give up his family estates and honours to his eldest son, to atone for his change of faith. This order, so unjust according to our modern notions, the noble convert submitted to ; but he declared 'that he was hardly dealt with !'

As he left the King's presence, he exclaimed with involuntary bitterness :

'Sire, I know that young man'—pointing to his son—'far, far better than your Majesty does. You may raise him, but you will live to repent it; he is crafty, subtle, and false; he can love no one. If ever he finds he can do you mischief, he will do it!'

In spite of this warning—that, later on, Charles must often have remembered—the King placed the false but fair-spoken Campbell in positions of trust. Under the guise of patriotism and religious zeal, he was as double-dealing towards Charles as he had been towards his father. With such a character the honest Montrose had little in common. He had scarcely joined the Scottish army, when he learnt Argyle was secretly scheming to become a military despot over the whole of the country north of the Tweed.

The Earl of Montrose, who had taken up arms against Charles solely from patriotic motives, was disgusted to find that the idea of dethroning him was openly talked of among the Covenanting leaders. As soon as his eyes were opened to their real designs, Montrose hurried back to Edinburgh; and while feeling unwilling to abandon his party, yet averse to such disloyalty, endeavoured to counteract Argyle's

ambitious schemes by framing a bond, and inducing several noblemen to sign it.

This bond was to the effect that no act of any importance was to be undertaken by any one member of the party without the full knowledge of all. This deed, so worded as to secure the safety of the country from Argyle's views, was afterwards brought forward against Montrose. When the deed was signed, he rejoined the army; but it was with a heavy heart and strong misgivings. When the Covenanters, on the 21st of August 1640, crossed the Tweed, it was Montrose whose lot it was, singularly enough, to lead the way. Newcastle was taken, after a victory over the royal troops at Newburn, by the Covenanters.

Just as I am leading you by my narrative to understand the reasons that led Montrose to change his political views, and from being a staunch Covenanter to turn into an equally devoted royalist, I must digress a little to describe the costume of the period, both of civilians and soldiers; for in those days dress was a badge of political parties.

The Puritans acquired the name of Roundheads from cropping their hair close to their heads. They looked upon the large, square beards hitherto worn by the clergy with great dislike. The Puritan ministers cut their hair and their beards as short as

they could, donned plain doublets, and wore Geneva bands. They, however, wore large boots, for it was the fashion in those days to wear shoes and boots two inches too long for the wearer's feet. A Cavalier's boots were not only very large, but fringed with lace, sometimes as low down as his jingling spurs.

‘What creature’s this, with his short hairs,
His little band, and huge long ears !’

said a royalist and satirical ballad of the day. The Cavaliers, on the contrary, wore their hair long, and flowing in a most picturesque fashion. They adorned their tall hats with ribbons and feathers. They trimmed their beards to a point, and favoured love-locks and moustaches ; they were gay in ornamented breeches, tight vest, and rich laced shirts, with velvet cloaks flung over the arm ; and, in fact, in every way opposed the plainness and simplicity of the Round-heads’ costume.

At that time soldiers had discarded the heavy cumbrous armour of previous reigns. They wore back and breast-plates of mail over coats of strong buff, stout boots, and helmets.

The bowmen of old were almost extinct. Fire-arms had superseded the bow and arrow ; the infantry of the day were pikemen and musketeers.

In these days of Chassepots and mitrailleuses, we can scarcely imagine how the heavy musket gun

in use then could be of much service, since the soldier could neither point nor fire the cumbrous weapon till it was placed on an iron rest. The musketeer had to fix the sharp-pointed legs of the rest into the ground before he could let off his gun. Four corps composed the King's cavalry. There were lancers and cuirassiers. The latter bore swords and pistols, and were so named from wearing cuirasses over their buff coats. Then there were dragoons and harquebussiers, so called because they carried a weapon known as a harquebuss. The bayonet was not introduced till much later in history.

It was during the truce that followed the easy capture of Newcastle by Montrose and other Scottish generals, that the former wrote to his injured sovereign. Although Montrose had a perfect right to address Charles, there were not wanting, among those who were in that irresolute monarch's confidence, many ready to betray all that passed to the Scotch.

The pretence that the Earl's letters to Charles were treacherous acts towards the Covenant, served Argyle's purpose well; for he and many of his colleagues had long doubted Montrose, because they knew he was too honest to support their secret schemes. However, when Montrose was taxed with

his correspondence with the King, he avowed it so openly and fearlessly, that even his worst enemies could not convict him of treachery. The letters, Montrose affirmed, contained merely good advice, which was probably thrown away on the vacillating King.

Montrose soon realized the fact that he was now suspected and watched by the Covenanters. As he himself expressed it to one of his friends, 'he was crossed ;' he therefore, in the early part of 1641, left the army and returned to Edinburgh.

The troubles of his native land at that time were indeed sufficient to wring his patriotic soul with grief and anguish. His relation Lord Napier, and many of Montrose's friends who shared his views, often visited him, to talk about public affairs. As one remedy for the evils that they all now perceived had arisen from the Covenanting agitation, Lord Napier implored his sovereign to visit Scotland in person. The tyranny of the popular movement was becoming greater and greater. The cry at first had been, 'Down with the bishops,' and much of the freedom we now enjoy may doubtless be traced to the opposition in those troublous times to the excessive prerogative of the Crown ; but from defence of religious freedom, the Scotch had proceeded to republicanism, and those who differed from them

were hunted down, under the cry that they were 'incendiaries.' None who had the ill-fortune to offend the Covenanting clergy were safe in that reign of terror, and honest and loyal persons were often denounced from Presbyterian pulpits.

Owing to some accidental expressions let fall by a dying man who, among others, had signed Montrose's bond at Cumbernauld, Argyle discovered the deed, and openly denounced the Earl. His honesty, however, once more saved him. When asked if he had indeed been instrumental in drawing up such a document, Montrose not only openly avowed his share in the transaction, but produced the very bond itself, and gave it up. It was then destroyed.

Finding that he was calumniated in his own neighbourhood, Montrose determined to vindicate himself by asking the clergymen on his property to meet him at a conference.

He met them first at Perth and then at Scone Abbey, and told them how he had drawn up the bond in consequence of his discovery of Argyle's ambitious schemes.

It must have been a striking moment when, later on, Montrose with perfect dignity and presence of mind confronted Argyle, and repeated all the accusations against him. The artful Argyle denied

the whole matter, and Montrose was arrested and confined in Edinburgh Castle.

After his lodgings in Edinburgh and his house at Old Montrose had been searched in vain for letters or papers likely to criminate him, the Earl was examined before a committee appointed by the Scottish Parliament, and treated with great indignity. In the midst of the persecution to which the Earl was subjected, Charles arrived at Holyrood. This was in August 1641. The unhappy monarch tried to conciliate the hearts of the stubborn Covenanters by giving away many titles and honours to the leaders ; but these concessions failed to strengthen his cause. Argyle himself was created a Marquis ; and then the King endeavoured to serve Montrose, who, after a time, was liberated, and rewarded with many flattering speeches. He however, for a time, retired into private life, and went to live at Old Montrose.

In that retreat he could not have been unhappy, because he loved study, and could fill up his leisure with many refined pursuits. There, however, came news of the civil wars between Charles and his Parliament. His sovereign wrote truly, when he said, 'Duty and loyalty were sufficient to Montrose,' who heard with grief how Charles had erected the royal standard at Nottingham. He watched

how, little by little, all hope of peace between the rival parties drifted away, and how rebellion, on the one hand, grew as the want of firmness was exhibited on the other. At last Montrose joined Charles, and offered to support the cause of royalty in Scotland by his sword. After a time, having received the King's commission, which was dated the first of February 1644, as Lieutenant-General of Scotland under Prince Maurice, our hero commenced that adventurous career which stamps him the most gallant champion that ever fought for a king. Having told you how he first became and then ceased to be a Covenanter, the immediate consequences of his change of opinion must be told in another chapter.





CHAPTER II.

‘He either fears his fate too much,
Or his deserts are small,
That puts it not unto the touch,
To win or lose it all.’

—MARQUIS OF MONTROSE.

IT was with no small difficulty that Montrose had obtained Charles’s consent to this expedition. In 1642, wearied with a contest in which he was always beaten by his Parliament, Charles had resorted to arms to subdue his rebellious subjects.

The Queen, on her return from Holland, where Charles had sent her for safety, had consulted Montrose as to the state of Scotland at that time.

They met at York, and Montrose placed every circumstance before her. No flatterer, the truthful cavalier told her that the state of his native land was as alarming as that of England, and that the

Covenanters, unless repressed, would prove as formidable as the English Puritans.

The descendant of the great Graham—'Graham More'—who defied the Romans under Severus, pleaded hard that the Queen should see England's danger before it was too late, if the Covenanters (as Montrose thought that they would) should join the English rebels. He told her, 'Force must be met with force,' and that Scotland, although armed by the Covenanters, yet held many a faithful stout heart, ready, if needs be, to die for the King; but that delay was fatal to the royal cause. 'Scotland,' he said, 'was like one suffering from some sad disease. If a physician took the malady in "time," the patient's life might even then be spared.'

Perhaps the earnestness with which he spoke in the singleness of his purpose might have had some influence with Henrietta Maria, but for the subtle advice of the double-dealing Hamilton.

Under pretence of congratulating the Queen on her safe return, the latter hurried back to York from Scotland to interpose delays, and suggest defects in Montrose's counsel.

'The Marquis,' Hamilton pleaded, 'was brave; but he was young, rash, and ambitious. Let the King first try gentle measures to preserve the fidelity of Scotland.'

Once more Hamilton's influence was against Montrose. The King and Queen were alike captivated and ensnared by one who was secretly employed by the Covenanters, and they would not heed Montrose's tale. After telling them that the Covenanters were arming a large body of men, strengthening their position, and preparing to march into England, our hero went sorrowfully away. The glamour of evil counsel was over weak, irresolute, deluded Charles ; and, till the Covenanters' army was marching eighteen thousand foot and two thousand horsemen strong towards the border, he still trusted in the advice of Hamilton, who kept assuring him that all was still peaceable and secure in the north.

When we find ourselves betrayed, we turn to the nearest support we can find to aid us. In his despair, King Charles remembered Montrose ; and when he thought on the young Earl's stedfast, true, and gallant nature, he asked his advice.

It was then, indeed, beyond Montrose's power to undo the mischief worked by that fatal delay. 'Sire,' he said sorrowfully, 'for a twelvemonth I have urged you to prevent what has now happened.'

He knew that while Scotland had provided herself with arms, men, and money, the King had neither men nor money at his command ; but he did not shrink from joining so failing a cause. He was

a fit descendant of the Graham More. 'Give me, Sire,' he said, 'but foreign arms and any aid from Ireland you can procure, and, please God, strong in my cause, I will yet re-animate Scotland, and create throughout that realm, and especially in the loyal Highlands, a reaction in your Majesty's favour.'

Montrose's offer was accepted by Charles. For even while in his heart the King mistrusted Hamilton, he wavered when the latter arrived at Oxford, where his Court was, and where, once more, his favourite exerted his influence over his unhappy master. Hamilton was accompanied into Charles's presence by his brother, the Earl of Lanerick.

They pretended, with great plausibility, that they had been banished from Scotland for their devotion to the royal cause, and compelled to fly for their lives; the fact being, that they had wilfully deceived the King, and had been all along in correspondence with his enemies.

Charles, although he mistrusted them, received them at Court, and allowed Lanerick to remain there. Montrose's noble nature was deeply wounded when he saw his master once more drawn into the Hamiltons' net.

He begged Charles to allow him to retire abroad, for he declared that nothing would induce him to stand by and see the Hamiltons once more in

favour. The King then reluctantly forbade them his presence, and Montrose drew up a protest, which he prevailed on a great many gallant Scotchmen to sign, promising, if the Covenanters invaded England, to protect the King's cause at the peril of their lives.

A committee was appointed by the King to ascertain the truth of the charges brought against the two Hamiltons. Montrose, Nithsdale, Aboyne, and Ogilvie undertook to substantiate the accusations brought against them, and the facts brought to light induced even Charles to see how treacherously both Hamilton and Lanerick had acted. The crime of garbling a letter of their sovereign's to induce several leading noblemen to take up arms against him, the fact that Lanerick had used the privy seal to a proclamation issued by the Covenanters to call together the large force now marching towards the border, were proved, and Hamilton was arrested by the King's command and sent to the castle of Pendennis.

Lanerick's arrest was also ordered, and he was to have been imprisoned in Ludlow Castle ; but he fled in disguise into Scotland, where the Presbyterians received him with open arms.

No obstacles now remained in our hero's way. Charles hesitated no longer, and on the first of

February 1644 gave Montrose a commission to act as Lieutenant-General in Scotland of all His Majesty's forces under the Captain-General, Prince Maurice ; the brave Graham refusing, with the modesty of real courage, to be commander-in-chief. Prince Maurice was Charles's nephew ; being son of that hapless Queen, Elizabeth of Bohemia, who had taken refuge in England after the loss of her husband and kingdom. Both he and his gallant but rash brother, Rupert, fought bravely for the King, their uncle ; but their eldest brother, Charles, had joined the Parliamentary side. From their younger sister, Sophia, the Electress, our present dynasty is directly descended.

Charles engaged the Earl of Antrim to land in Argyll with ten thousand men of Ulster ; but beyond that, and recommending him to the Marquis of Newcastle, then commanding the King's forces in Durham, he could do nothing for Montrose, not even by sending a handful of men with him to the border. Thus almost unattended, with the royal commission in his pocket and his sword by his side, Montrose set off upon what seemed, but for his resistless enthusiasm, one of the wildest expeditions ever dreamed of by romantic youth. Scotland was, if not wholly disloyal, so overawed by the Covenanters, that even among those who were still true to their

King, few had the courage to resist the tide of rebellion, so steadily setting in. The Covenanters had entered into a solemn league with the English rebels, and had promised to render them armed assistance to enable them to reduce the King to submission.

However, resolute and faithful, and even hopeful, Montrose set out. He still reckoned on the ancient loyalty of the Highlands. In spite of their disgrace, there was a large party at Court who still befriended the Hamiltons, and cavilled at Montrose; and even among loyal men, his expedition was looked on as too wild and romantic to succeed. He cared not, however, but set off with all the high hopes of one who believes that he has a mission entrusted to him, that he must die rather than not perform. The Earl first met the Marquis of Newcastle at Durham, a county ever loyal to the King's cause, and where many a true-hearted English country gentleman had mortgaged his broad acres to raise men for the cause. The Marquis of Newcastle received Montrose kindly. That nobleman, who had quitted the quiet tranquil country life he loved to serve Charles, was one who could appreciate our hero's character.

The Marquis of Newcastle was as wise in council as he was able in war, and was respected by both sides. He told Montrose that his own position was hazardous in the extreme, and that he had no cavalry

to spare him ; but the Earl persuaded him to give him a hundred horsemen, and two field-pieces ; and Newcastle promised to do all that he could for Montrose when happier times should come. Those fairer times, however, never came, as far as Newcastle was concerned. For, after the battle of Marston Moor, and the consequent surrender of York, he considered himself so wronged by Prince Rupert, who would not listen to the Marquis's advice, and so lost that battle, that he left England in disgust, and threw up his command of Charles's forces. However, that was subsequent to Montrose's interview with him on his road to Scotland. Newcastle sent orders to the officers of all the King's forces in Cumberland and Westmoreland to aid Montrose as far as they could. Consequently he entered Scotland on the thirteenth of April, at the head of about eleven hundred men, and a gallant troop of volunteers, about two hundred in number.

Most of Montrose's troops were militia ; many of them raw, undisciplined, taken from the plough to fight for a cause they were too ignorant to understand. Montrose counted much on the Earl of Antrim's promised aid.

Carried away by Montrose's enthusiasm at Oxford, Antrim, who, though Irish, was also descended from one of the noblest Highland families, the Macdonalds,

had been driven by the rebellious faction of his own country to seek refuge in England.

Ireland then, as now, was a disaffected country. Charles attempted to add to the standing army of that kingdom, trusting that the Irish would help him in suppressing the Covenanters; but added to the rebellion in England, he had had a very serious insurrection to contend with in Ireland,—a rebellion instigated by the Roman Catholic priests, who would willingly have exterminated the very name of England from their language. By the first of April the Earl of Antrim had engaged to land ten thousand Irish on the coast of Argyll that lay nearest to Ireland.

The first obstacle Montrose met with was a mutiny among his north country soldiers. This was instigated by a Sir Richard Graham; and though the Scottish soldiers who had joined Montrose did all that they could to keep the band together, a great many of the border men deserted the Cavaliers' standard and fled towards home. This mutiny took place on the banks of the Annan. Daily expecting news from Antrim, who had promised to send him a messenger the moment he landed, Montrose was bitterly disappointed, and knew not how to proceed, as day after day passed and no message came. He received intelligence that the Covenanters under

Leslie were advancing on York, in order to unite their numbers to the English Parliamentary army, and that the Earl of Callandar (a renegade from the King's cause, who had sworn that he would never join the Covenanters) had raised a second army in Scotland. Montrose knew they could intercept his progress if he attempted to go on to Stirling, which his friends strongly urged his doing at all risks.

The Scottish Cavaliers under Montrose took Dumfries, and erected the royal standard; but the Earl felt that it were to sacrifice his cherished hope of doing the King good service if he risked an encounter with the Covenanters, and therefore he retired to Carlisle, determined to fight for the crown in the north of England, until he could see some chance of success for it in Scotland.

He gathered together a few more soldiers—a mere handful of troops—when he and his friends returned across the border, and with great gallantry took Morpeth, captured a fort on the Tyne, and victualled Newcastle with provisions procured from Alnwick.

It took Montrose nearly three weeks to wrest Morpeth Castle from the Covenanters; but when the keys of the place were given up, he treated the garrison well, releasing the ten officers and a hundred and eighty soldiers, on their giving him their word never to fight again against Charles.

While thus harassing the northern Covenanters, Montrose, who about this time was created a Marquis, received a hasty summons from Prince Rupert to join him at York.

Long, however, before Montrose could join the impetuous Prince, the latter had fought and lost the battle of Marston Moor. It was not till the day after the battle that Montrose came up with Rupert's corps, then in full retreat.

Struck with the gallant appearance of Prince Rupert's cavalry, Montrose implored the Prince to give him a troop to take back into the north.

'Give me,' cried Montrose, 'but a thousand of those horsemen, and I will cut my way into the very heart of Scotland.'

Prince Rupert promised to do so, but did not keep his word. He was over persuaded by those who only saw in Montrose an impetuous reckless soldier, that the venture was not worth the risk of a thousand horsemen; and so the Marquis was told that no aid could be given him.

All this time a little gallant band—the forlorn hope of Scottish loyalty—still supported Montrose. Two of his friends he had sent into Scotland in disguise, that they might ascertain who, among those not yet corrupted by Argyle's arts, would support the royal cause; but several faithful friends

still kept with him, when, leaving Prince Rupert, he went back to Carlisle.

It required, however, more than even the high spirit of that hitherto undaunted band to hope on in face of the news brought back to Montrose by Lord Ogilvie and Sir William Rollock. They listened to the narrative of all that they had seen during their fortnight's wanderings in Scotland, and then came the whisper, that in the face of such news the Marquis would be 'mad to proceed on his expedition.'

The Scottish Covenanters had long before this obtained the boon, if it were one, for which they had so long striven. They were free to practise their religion. They had abolished Episcopacy, as far as the State was concerned, yet with fanatical zeal still hoped to establish a uniformity of worship with themselves in England.

Charles they well knew was warmly attached to the Episcopal form of Church government, and the Covenanters dreaded lest the King by force of arms should re-establish his authority, and thus interpose an obstacle to the cherished idea of making England as Presbyterian as Scotland. They had no charity for those who could not believe the doctrines of Calvin, and would not unite in denouncing all prelates of the English Catholic Church as idolaters, Papists, and 'malignants,'—a term applied to those

who would not sign the Covenant. The Scotch pulpits resounded with praises of such as were ready to shed their blood, and take up arms against Charles the First.

The teaching of these ministers of Christianity should be peace, but the Presbyterians of those days thought otherwise, for they hurled malediction after malediction on those few devoted men who still remained true to 'Church and State.'

'Rather than sanction,' cried the fanatics, 'the surplice, the tippet, or the corner cap again in our country, we will wade through rivers of blood to gain a purer faith.'

Such a temper of mind in the Scots was most acceptable to the English Puritans. They had sent a hundred thousand pounds to help their allies in equipping the army already advancing far into England. Not only did the Scots thus support the English in their rebellion, but they seized every castle, town, and port they could lay hands upon in Scotland, levied large armies of men, and called upon all to support the Covenant. Nevertheless, the Scotch as a nation were loyal at heart, and in many parts openly defied the Covenanters. The clergy had intimidated and misled many. Argyle, ruling the Western Highlands, had disaffected his clan ; the towns had succumbed to what, indeed, was

little short of religious mania ; but the Gordons, the men of Athol, Mar, Badenoch, Lochaber, and others, still believed in the Church, and were faithful to their King.

Such were the tidings brought by the two cavaliers sent by Montrose to ascertain who were and who were not likely to support him, if he could but succeed in getting into those portions of the Highlands still faithful to the royal cause.

Montrose summoned all his friends to a council. He knew that among the number there was one, the Earl of Traquair, who, though honoured and trusted by Charles, was at heart a traitor. Well did Montrose know how, when the Cavaliers had begun to waver and be cast down at the gloomy news reported them, Traquair had done all he could to induce those who up to that time had adhered to Montrose to join the Covenanters.

There is no foe so insidious as a false friend. Montrose would have liked to have openly denounced Traquair as a traitor ; but he restrained his anger, and met his friends calm, steadfast, and unmoved. His handsome face was sad but resolute in its noble expression, as he heard first one and then the other advise him to abandon so hopeless a cause.

Many urged him to retire abroad and send his

commission back to the King, telling him that as Antrim had failed him, he had no possible prospect of success.

After hearing all that his friends could urge, our hero, as undaunted and fearless as ever, declared that they were free if they chose to abandon him ; but ‘as for me,’ he continued, ‘I will never despair. My King is in danger, and I will never forsake him. If I cannot succeed, I will perish !’

Yet in spite of the spirit with which Montrose spoke, most of those who listened to him remained unconvinced. It is so hard to hope against ruin staring one in the face.

Most of Montrose’s listeners were devoted, as only Scotch people can be, to the cause of their King. Many were descended from those who, on the great battle-fields of Scotland, had shed their blood for his ancestors ; but ‘without arms, men, or money,’ they argued, ‘how can such a desperate cause succeed ?’

Seeing all their doubts and fears written in their grave looks and downcast eyes, Charles’s devoted champion conceived a daring plan. He confided it to only one person—his friend Lord Ogilvie. He told the Cavaliers that they had perhaps some justice on their side ; but that, as for him, he was determined to trust in God, and carry out his resolu-

tion ; only, before doing so, he would lay the state of the case before the King, and beg him to give them aid with men and arms.

The little band, which by this time had fallen off to about a hundred men, accordingly started off towards Oxford, where the King still held his Court. All believed that Montrose intended accompanying them thence. Such, however, was far from the Marquis's intention. Two days after they had left Carlisle, Montrose secretly slipped away, and, accompanied by only two companions, rejoined Lord Aboyne.

Lord Aboyne was a Gordon, and one of Lord Huntly's family, who had never quite forgiven Montrose his want of faith to that nobleman when the former was fighting for the Covenant. The Marquis counted much on the loyal, brave, and trusty Gordons, and therefore he told his plans to Aboyne. Montrose, however, found him so lukewarm that he ceased to urge his co-operation, and advised him to remain quietly at Carlisle till he heard how the scheme he had formed should succeed.

Every pass and glen in his native land was well known to our hero ; but the difficulty was, how he and his two friends should pass the border, along which the Covenanters had placed large bodies of men.

It was in the month of August that the Marquis, in company with Sir William Rollock and an officer named Sibbald, set off. Montrose, disguised as Sibbald's groom, rode on a very miserable-looking horse, leading another by the bridle. It was difficult, however, to disguise his natural majesty and demeanour, as the result proved. They were riding along when they met a man-servant of that Sir Richard Graham who had instigated the mutiny of the Marquis's men at Annan. The man, deceived by their conversation,—for Montrose had served quite long enough with the Covenanters to be able to imitate their canting phraseology,—grew very friendly with them. He directed them on their road, supposing all the time that they were Scotchmen hastening to join General Leslie, who was watching that part of Scotland for Argyle's party.

He also told them that his master, Sir Richard Graham, had openly declared for the Covenanters. You can imagine with what feelings the three travellers heard that the knight had promised to give any 'malignants,' as those loyal to Charles were called, up to the general for immediate execution.

However, such a fate was not yet intended for Montrose. Their next adventure was even more alarming. They met a soldier walking along, who

had served under the Marquis of Newcastle, and who recognised Montrose and addressed him by name.

The Marquis turned away, and appeared not to have noticed his salutation.

‘My lord,’ said the soldier, ‘you cannot deceive me. No lacquey ever rode as you do. I know my Lord of Montrose well enough; but go your way, and may God bless you wherever your way may lead you.’

Montrose gave the man some money, and then hurried on. He knew that if he were betrayed, not only would he meet with no mercy for his loyal conduct to the King, but that the Covenanters would make a dangerous use of the papers he had with him. Hurrying on at their utmost speed, till their weary horses were almost dropping with fatigue, the three travellers, after three perilous days’ travelling, arrived on the fourth at Tulliebelton, a large property close to the Grampian Hills, in Perthshire, and not far from the calm, noble river, the Tay, belonging to Montrose’s cousin, Patrick Graham of Inchbrakie. Under his roof Montrose was not only safe but welcome. There, however, he dared not remain long, for the Covenanters had spies all over the country; and the Marquis knew that as soon as they heard he was in Scotland, Inchbrakie’s house would be suspected of harbouring him.

He therefore hid away among the hills during the day-time, returning to Tulliebelton at night-fall, where Patrick Graham concealed him in a neighbouring hovel. His two friends, disguised as ordinary clansmen, set off to learn the state of the country.

They came back with a grievous tale. The tyranny of the Covenanters, they reported, kept the entire kingdom in a state of terror. The whole authority of Scotland was then vested in an order founded in 1638, that of Four Tables. These four tables consisted of the nobility, gentry, clergy, and burgesses. The Covenant had been, as it were, their eldest child, for the first act of this new order had been its production. None dared openly condemn this state of public affairs. If they were so rash, they but too often paid the penalty with their lives, or property; often being heavily fined, or imprisoned.

The Marquis eagerly inquired what course the Marquis of Huntly had adopted.

He sorrowfully learnt, from their reply, how the head of the gallant Gordons had laid down his arms, and had fled into Caithness. The Gordons, meanwhile, being left completely without a leader, were greatly depressed, and the whole state of the Royalists most deplorable.

The Marquis of Huntly's son had joined the Covenanters; so, even if the Gordons had been inclined to join Montrose, they had no leader, and, although as loyal as ever, were completely dispirited.

Montrose, still undaunted, hoped on. He knew that in that portion of the Highlands influenced by the MacCaileam Mor, the Highlanders were so overawed by Argyle, that an appeal, if made, would be worse than useless; so he determined to call upon the 'Redshanks,' as certain independent clans were named.

In this resolution he was strangely confirmed by an incident that, to his enthusiastic mind, seemed almost like a direct message from Heaven.

After the return of Sir William Rollock and Sibbald from their expedition, dispirited and anxious, though undaunted, Montrose wandered one day over the hills and moors around Inchbrakie. At last, at nightfall, he repaired to Methven wood, and seating himself on a stone near the hut where he intended passing the night, he gave way to a transport of grief.

His fine figure was enveloped in a Highland plaid; and his cousin Patrick Graham watched him bury his face in his hands, and heard him declare that his heart was breaking to see his native land so enslaved by fanatics and ambitious nobles

His eyes were filled with tears, as, raising them first towards heaven and then towards the mountains, he cried with passionate earnestness—

‘Be merciful, Lord, to my country ! Remove the curse under which it lies, and enable me to be the unworthy means of saving it !’

Montrose had scarcely ejaculated these words, when down a woodland path, above the mountain spot where the cavaliers were seated, a red deer, startled from its lair, bounded along.

Up sprang the cavaliers. Was it a traitor, they thought, as they could just discern a figure descending the pathway.

The stranger was no traitor, but a Highlander in full Gaelic garb, armed at all points. His face was stern and pale, and he looked very weary, as well he might, for he had traversed high mountains, brooks, and rivers, to bear to the clans the tidings of war, by means of a *fiery cross*, which he carried aloft in his right hand.

The symbol of religion was seamed and scathed at every point with fire ! It was a summons from Allaster Macdonald, who had just landed in the Highlands, to all the clans to follow the King’s lieutenant, ‘under pain of fire and sword !’

‘What news ?’ demanded Montrose, who believed that now had come an answer to his prayer. The

answer was brief. The Highlander was carrying the summons to all the loyal clansmen of Perthshire.

You remember that the Earl of Antrim, four months before, had promised Montrose to bring him aid from Ireland ; and how also it had seemed to fail our hero. Some Highland shepherds had told Montrose that they had heard of the 'Irish' who had landed in the mountains ; but he had given small credence to their tale.

This, then, was the promised aid, Montrose and his friends decided, when the Highlander had passed on. They were speedily more fully enlightened, when soon afterwards a near neighbour of Inchbrakie's—a 'safe' man, as those loyal to King Charles were called—told them 'that he had undertaken to deliver some important State letters to the Marquis of Montrose, who was at Carlisle!'

Inchbrakie could not help laughing in his sleeve, when he reflected that not three hundred yards away was the very person his friend was going to seek ; but in those disturbed times it did not do to be too confidential. He therefore merely promised to give them to Montrose, 'even,' he added, 'if I go on purpose to Carlisle.'

That very evening Montrose eagerly scanned the letters, all of which breathed a spirit of resolute daring. Allaster, or Alexander, a Scot by birth and

descent, had landed with about twelve hundred men on the Ardnamurchan coast, in the Western Highlands.

The news of the arrival of this little army soon came to Argyle's ears. Although but a handful of ill-armed recruits, the Scotch dictator was ordered to go and rout them out of the mountains.

Argyle's first step was to destroy the ships that Allaster had brought over from Ireland. When the latter found that he could not, even if he would, re-embark, he swore vengeance against those ancient foes of his clan, the false Campbells.

He laid waste the land that lay between the Ardnamurchan coast and Kintail, and harassed the Campbells; but very few Highlanders obeyed his call, for he was no mighty chief to invoke enthusiasm by his name and presence. The want of a leader was very apparent, and deterred many from following him, although the Highlanders were warmly attached to the royal cause. Those who did go were principally men of Badenoch; and Allaster's hopes fell when he found that the chief of the Mackenzies, the Earl of Seaforth, though a Royalist at heart, had been induced by the influence of family ties to declare for the Covenanters.

The desertion of Seaforth implied that none of the brave Mackenzies would take up arms for

Charles; for the clan, of course, went with their chieftain; and though the cross of fire had been taken far and wide, charging all to fight in defence of the King, there was but small prospect of success, till Montrose received the letters.

He replied to them at once, and bid all who loved the royal cause to meet him on a certain day in the Athol country.

There seemed magic in Montrose's very name. When Allaster Macdonald told his men that ere long our hero would be with them, they shouldered their muskets, and grasped their clubs and broad-swords with renewed spirit; and, led by their general, they marched toward Blair in Athol, which they took on their way to the given rendezvous.

The Highlanders of Athol, real descendants of the Caledonian Gael, were devoted to Montrose. On their devoted attachment to his person our hero counted, when he bid Allaster await him in the Athol country. They would not have risen in arms for the Allaster; but when Montrose appeared, there was no lack of sturdy clansmen to answer to his appeal.

The appointed day and hour arrived; and the Irish brigade, and those Highlanders who had joined them, assembled on a plain near Blair Athol.

They had been told that Montrose bore the

King's commission, and were therefore unprepared to see coming along the valley only two Highlanders. Montrose and his cousin stood in their midst before they well knew he was near at hand. Astonished, they inquired :

‘Can that be he who is to save us from destruction? That simple mountaineer the mighty chieftain we have expected?’

Still more astonished were the Irish to witness the enthusiasm of the clansmen.

‘Come every hill plaid, and true heart that wears one ;
Come every steel blade, and strong hand that bears one !’

They were ready to cry, ‘to fight for Montrose,’ as they greeted the Graham.

‘All would now be well,’ cried the Highlanders. ‘He was there, all would be now well ! We will chase,’ cried they, ‘false MacCaileam Mor back to his lair ; he shall know that we revenge the burning of our ships ! We’ll compell him to repent his defiance of the King’s authority.’

Again and again the plain near Blair Athol resounded with those Gaelic cheers.

Those few Macdonalds who were there raised their war-cry—

‘My son, my son, quicken thy hand
And harden thy blows.’

Thus did Macdonald’s little army welcome Mon-

trose. Though he came among them with no outward sign of power, his greeting was as hearty as had he headed all his sovereign's buffcoats.

Our hero lost no time in inaction. He at once set off southward from Blair Athol, his spirits greatly raised by a number of Highlanders joining his standard just as he commenced his march.

The men of Athol were all loyal to King Charles, and had only waited to take up arms in his cause, till they saw the Irish headed by a leader of note and fame. As their number was upwards of eight hundred, Montrose looked upon this addition to his force with no little satisfaction.

On marched he and his clansmen, armed with muskets, pikes, and broadswords, till they came to the Castle of Weeme, in the country of the Menzieses. There Montrose halted to give a severe lesson to its owners, and to strike terror into his enemies' hearts. He burnt the houses and wasted the corn fields of that clan. The Menzies had large possessions in the Perthshire Highlands, and had sorely harassed the rear of Montrose's army, although he had sent a message of truce to the Castle of Weeme. Montrose's cousin, Patrick Graham of Inchbrakie, preceded the band, as an advanced guard.

This gallant Highlander was much beloved by the Athol men, so that when Montrose bade him

select the nimblest of their number for scouts, there was no lack of volunteers. The value of so faithful a leader was soon shown in Inchbrakie's alacrity, for he brought back word that a large body of men had been seen on the hillside at Bucknith. They turned out to be friends in the guise of foes, for they were Highlanders commanded by Lord Kilpont, son of the Earl of Menteith, who had been ordered by the Scottish Government to arm all his clansmen against Montrose.

The young Earl had so far obeyed his orders, as to gather together about five hundred of his retainers, as well as several of the men of Keir and Napier. In his heart, however, he had no desire to fight for the Covenanters. Two of Montrose's greatest friends, the Master of Maderty and Sir Colin Drummond, were with Lord Kilpont. When they heard that the force of 'malignants' they had been charged to crush were commanded by Montrose, they needed but slight inducement to join him and his clansmen.

The party Kilpont sent to negotiate readily listened to the arguments of Montrose in favour of a cause that might be but a losing one, but which, urged he, was that of honour and renown :

'Its watchword was honour, its pay was renown.'

The party under Lord Kilpont joined Montrose ;

and, thus augmented,—his army now numbering about three thousand,—hurried eagerly forward to strike the first blow for the royal cause. But their enemies were more than double him in strength. All the cavalry Montrose could boast were three miserable horses, one of which was appropriated to Sir William Rollock, who had been lame from childhood. Arrayed against him was a powerful body of seven hundred horsemen and six thousand foot soldiers, well appointed and well armed, with four pieces of field artillery. The Covenanters awaited him at Perth. Argyle was pursuing him, although some days' march behind.

To Perth Montrose determined to go, and if possible venture a pitched battle before the false MacCaileam Mor should come up with him and his Redshanks.

The Earl of Elcho commanded the Covenanters, and led them out to the plain of Tippermuir, beyond the fair town of Perth. Confident in the superiority of their numbers, they awaited Montrose. Victory, they thought, must surely be theirs; for, in addition to their superior numbers, they were led to battle by many a gallant chief; and the clergy who accompanied the army declared 'that God would not fail to give them victory.' The Earl of Elcho commanded the right flank, Sir James Scott—an officer

who had greatly distinguished himself abroad—the left, and the Earl of Tullibardine the main body of the Covenanters. In order to enclose the gallant little army, advancing so pluckily to meet them, they were drawn out into one long line, with horsemen at each wing. Montrose's eagle eye discerned and provided against his adversary's tactics. He marshalled his men three deep, and desired the first rank to fire kneeling, the second bending, and the third standing. He placed himself in the post of danger, opposite Sir James Scott's left flank.

Thus drawn up, the two armies could measure each other's strength.

Before beginning the fight, Montrose sent a flag of truce to Lord Elcho, with a message commanding them in the King's name, and his own, to surrender; declaring that the thought of shedding his countrymen's blood was odious to him, and that he wished 'his victories might be written without a single red letter.'

The Covenanters, certain of success, returned no reply; but they sent young Drummond, who bore the message, into Perth, threatening to behead him when the battle was over.

The conflict began between a few of Lord Elcho's horsemen and some of Montrose's Highland scouts. But before a drop of blood was shed the hero

addressed his little army. He walked along the ranks of those devoted men, not one of whom but would have died for him.

‘Clansmen,’ said he, his flashing eye scanning the whole length of his line, ‘you have but few arms, while yonder soldiers have plenty. But there are stones on this moor ; let each one of you beat out the brains of the first canting Covenanter he meets, and seize his sword !’

With a great rallying cry his advice was followed. The horsemen were driven back by the desperate courage of the Redshanks ; and the stones hurled at the foe were, as it turned out, their most formidable weapons. In vain Elcho’s artillery discharged their cannon. Helter skelter fled his army that so short a time before had blasphemously called itself the ‘army of God ;’ and Montrose, without the loss of a single man, had routed the Covenanters. Victory was his, and all his enemy’s cannon, baggage, tents, and arms fell into his hand. His Highlanders pursued the flying foe ; and on the very evening of the fight Montrose entered the prosperous city of Perth. The loss on the Covenanters’ side was very great ; and besides the prisoners taken by the clansmen, when Montrose entered Perth he found about eight hundred Fife men, whom he imprisoned till they solemnly swore never again to bear arms

against the King,—an oath which, in spite of the religious superiority laid claim to by their party, many did not hesitate to break as soon as Montrose was out of sight.

He treated the citizens of Perth very clemently, hoping to win them to his sovereign's cause. He compelled them, however, to pay a fine, and to entertain himself and his followers for the three days they remained in the city. Montrose did not remain long in Perth. A few gentlemen of distinction joined him when the battle of Tippermuir had shown them how gallant a leader they would have in Montrose. But our hero noted with gloom and amazement how small were their number in comparison with those who, excited by fanatic zeal, upheld the rebellious blue banner of the Scottish Covenant. The Earl of Kinnoul was among the number of those who joined the Scottish Cavaliers. Added to this disappointment, Montrose, after the battle of Tippermuir, found himself deserted by large bodies of clansmen ; not because they had any intention of abandoning one to whom they were so attached, but because it was a Highland custom to retire with spoil acquired in a battle ; and the Athol men were eager to take their booty home, while Montrose would fain have followed up his success by another conflict.

Argyle, he heard, was marching rapidly on him, joined by a southern army, alarmed at the seizure of Perth; and our hero, when he measured his own resources by the standard of the MacCaileam Mor's large force, felt that he dared not remain in Perth to meet his powerful foe.

Accordingly quitting Perth, he led his men across the River Tay, to a place called Cupar in Angus, where they encamped on the site of what had once been a famous monastery. He was joined by Sir Thomas Ogilvie and several others of the Angus gentry; but a terrible event took place the very next day in our hero's camp, that dashed all the joy that his success at Tippermuir had excited in his bosom.

John, Lord Kilpont, who had joined Montrose, had incurred the anger of the Covenanters by doing so. They chose as their instrument of revenge a Highlander named James Stewart of Ardvoirlich, who plotted how to put a diabolical deed, planned by his crafty head, into execution.

It is impossible to imagine a baser deed. Lord Kilpont was a most accomplished scholar, soldier, and gentleman. Stewart was his vassal, whom Kilpont had admitted to the closest intimacy. The latter had even shared his tent with Stewart at Cupar, little dreaming that beneath his plaid there lay so

close to him a dark designing villain. Yet so it was. Early next morning, Stewart, taking Kilpont aside, revealed to his astonished ears a horrible plot. The young lord, so above crime that he could scarcely understand even its existence, started back when Stewart told him that he intended to assassinate Montrose, and then, escaping to the Covenanters' army, claim a large reward. Knowing that Lord Kilpont loved him, the base wretch tried to influence him to join in the plot.

The horror depicted on Kilpont's face as he listened, convinced James Stewart that his patron and friend must not live to betray him. No thought of former benefits or kindnesses stayed his hand. Suddenly turning upon Lord Kilpont, he stabbed him to the heart ; and then, favoured by the gloom of the early morning, fled to Argyle, who, to his disgrace, raised him to a good post in his army. When Montrose, hurriedly aroused by the noise of a great tumult in the camp, rushed out, he found his friend's lifeless body lying prone upon the heather, stained by the bright red blood of his noble heart.

Montrose's grief knew no bounds. He embraced those cold, pale cheeks, so lately full of life, and pressed his friend's sad lips, whose last utterance had been a repudiation of violence and treachery !

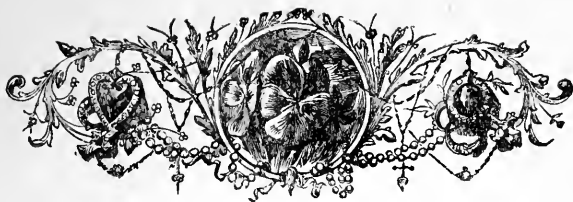
The bards of his clan wailed over his dead body, and told of his deeds of valour as they bore it back to his tent, and prepared a bier to carry it home. Turning away with heavy sighs and tears, Montrose left his clan to sing the coronach over their chieftain's body. The murderer had escaped, and there was nothing left but to give the body a fitting funeral. In order to do this, nearly four hundred of Lord Kilpont's clan quitted Montrose. That was a terrible loss to him, because the Athol men had already left Montrose. In spite of being joined by a number of brave gentlemen, the news that, in addition to the army commanded by Argyle, a large force of northern Covenanters had assembled at Aberdeen, headed by Lord Burleigh, greatly damped the spirits of the Cavaliers. Yet Montrose did not hesitate; and on the 11th of September 1644, he marched down upon Aberdeen, and prepared to give Lord Burleigh battle.

First of all, Montrose sent a flag of truce bidding the town to surrender. The citizens returned no reply to a missive from one whom they had once opposed as a Covenanter, and now resisted as a Royalist.

Once Montrose had marched into Aberdeen, bearing the colours of a party to which he had been true as long as he believed that the motive of

their resistance to the King was pure and good. Now he bore attached on his plaid a ribbon of red hue ; and yet, strange to say, he was not the only one of that host who had changed sides.





CHAPTER III.

•News of battle ! news of battle !
Hark ! 'tis ringing down the street,
And the archways and the pavement
Bear the clang of hurrying feet !'

—AYTOUN.

WHEN the good burghers of Aberdeen found Montrose so close to them, they were thoroughly dismayed. By a wonderful turn of fortune, the political position of their fair city had changed greatly since they and the Marquis had last met.

Four or five years before, the Aberdeen burghers, loyal to King Charles, had resisted that enforced submission to the Scottish Covenant which Montrose, then a Covenanter, had forced them to yield at the point of the sword.

In 1644, the Marquis returned to find the once loyal citizens Covenanters, while he himself, having become a Cavalier, was daring and planning the

most venturesome deeds for the sake of a monarch whom once he had deemed a tyrant !

The clan Gordon also, who in 1639 had been so devotedly loyal, had now, as it were, enlisted on the other side, although still at heart true to King Charles. A clan is bound to fight under the banner supported by its chief, and the Marquis of Huntly had neither forgotten nor forgiven Montrose's apparent want of good faith towards himself when the latter had led him as a prisoner to Edinburgh. Thus the greatest blemish on our hero's shield, the greatest stain upon his fame, was the means, humanly speaking, of his ultimate fate ! Had the Gordons fought from the first side by side with the Grahams, perchance the tale of the great Scottish civil wars might have been a very different one to that recorded by history.

Lord Lewis Gordon, a fair knightly youth, and Huntly's third son, had raised his father's clan in defence of the Covenant, although in 1639 the young chieftain had headed an enterprise for King Charles.

Montrose's plan was to engage Burleigh's army before Argyle could come up with him ; though with that discretion which is said to be the better part of valour, the great MacCaileam Mor seemed to linger behind, and to be in no haste to overtake

his expeditious rival. When Montrose found his message disregarded by the enemy, he determined to fight. Unequal indeed were the numbers of the belligerents. Lord Burleigh headed a force of two thousand foot soldiers and five hundred cavalry; while Montrose, for the time deserted by the Athol men, who had gone home with their booty, could only muster fifteen hundred men and forty-four horsemen.

The battle commenced between Montrose's right flank and the Gordons, headed in person by Lord Lewis. Rash, though valiant, as became his name, Lord Lewis Gordon charged his foe with his horsemen.

He was met with desperate courage by the Redshanks. Their valour, aided by twenty horsemen despatched to their help by their vigilant general the moment that he noted the Gordons' onset, was crowned with success. The Gordons fled before those half-armed but devoted clansmen, who, yelling out their war-cries, would fain have pursued their flying foe; but their brave leaders prudently held their impetuosity in check. The result proved that they were fortunate in their prudence. The enemy's right flank, of well-tried horsemen, charged Montrose's right wing.

The Marquis at the very moment of their ad-

vance was crying out to those among his men who were engaged against Gordon's force: 'To close quarters,' cried he, 'and give no quarter to traitors! on at them with your broadswords and the butt-end of your firearms; spare none who have planned treachery and treason!' He saw there was no time to be lost. He rallied his horsemen and sent them to the aid of his left flank. The horsemen attacked the enemy's rear; and, inspired by their leader's words, the Redshanks, with desperate valour, beat back the foe:

'Nor victory could desert a band so brave!'

Montrose had the satisfaction of seeing the enemy's right flank as fully routed as their left; and no longer restraining his men, the Highlanders rushed after their flying foes up the streets of Aberdeen, soon strewn with heaps of dead bodies.

In the height of the battle one poor fellow of Montrose's army had both his legs shot off by a cannon ball. His companions paused for a moment in dismay. The sufferer was an Irishman, and he recovered his spirits in a moment.

'What are you halting for, brave comrades?' cried he; 'it's the fortune of war! In future, I'll fight on horseback.'

After a loud cheer this Irish Spartan severed his

leg from his body with his own claymore. 'Bury that,' cried he, 'with the dead!' Montrose took good care to promote such a hero.

Montrose did not rest long at Aberdeen ; for he heard that, besides Argyle's army, the Covenanters had sent a large force from the border, commanded by Lord Callander, to assist the MacCaileam Mor's troops. He therefore marched to a village named Kintore, ten miles distant from Aberdeen. From this place Sir William Rollock undertook to set off to Oxford, the bearer of despatches to Charles, in which, after telling him of his victorious career, he implored the King to send him supplies of men and arms.

The Marquis's great hope lay in the Gordons, whom he still trusted would join him. He had stationed himself at Kintore, with an especial view to their repairing to his little army. Bitter, indeed, was his disappointment when he found how resolutely that clan kept aloof. Finding that the fear of offending their chief, Huntly, had more influence with the Gordons than their attachment to the royal cause, our hero, hiding his heavy baggage and guns in a bog, determined to lead his followers up into the mountains. His own knowledge of the Highlands was great ; and he counted on being better able to defy Argyle's superior numbers in those im-

pregnable passes than in a less mountainous district.

From Kintore the Cavaliers marched to Inverury ; and three days after they had left it, the Covenanters entered Aberdeen.

Argyle's first act on entering the city was to issue a proclamation, offering twenty thousand pounds to any one who would produce Montrose, dead or alive. Highland fidelity, however, was as strong in that century as when, a hundred years later, a royal fugitive trusted it not in vain ; no bribe was large enough to tempt those faithful clansmen ; no reward was large enough to make them betray one who had trusted in their honour.

Montrose intended to cross the River Spey. This river is very wide and large, and one of the most rapid in Scotland, as its name, indeed, denotes—'spey' being derived from a word meaning 'activity' or 'force.' It runs through a wild mountainous district, almost inaccessible except to those who, like Montrose and his Redshanks, could endure the fatigue of hasty marches over rugged hills, with but scanty fare to cheer the way.

Montrose reached the banks of the Spey at the point where he intended to cross over, only to find arrayed against him a body of five thousand Covenanters in battle array, ready to attack him

and his handful of men should they dare to attempt its passage. To do so would have been madness and certain death; so Montrose turned aside on his course, and following the bent of the river, went into Badenoch.

The fatigue, anxiety, and disappointments our hero had undergone now told upon him. He fell dangerously ill, and although secure for the moment in a strong fortress, his devoted clansmen for some days anxiously watched their beloved leader's sick-bed.

The rumours of his illness reached the Covenanters, and public thanks were offered up for what the preachers termed 'a great deliverance!'

It was openly announced by the Presbyterian clergy that 'the Lord had slain Montrose;' and no greater proof of his prowess can be given than the joy felt at the report of his death.

Montrose, however, recovered, and the hopes of the Covenanters fell to the ground. Even while on a bed of sickness he had planned how he could defeat his powerful enemy Argyle. He determined to leave no stone unturned to add to his numbers, so he sent Allaster Macdonald with a large party of Irish to the Western Highlands; when, as soon as he was sufficiently recovered, he crossed the Grampians and reappeared again in Blair Athol early in

October. He took possession of an old castle there called Fyvie, and awaited Macdonald's return. Montrose had abandoned his cherished hope of help from the Gordons, but anxiously expected Macdonald to return, believing that the latter would not fail to bring fresh recruits from the Western Highlands.

Montrose reposed great faith in Allaster Macdonald, or 'Colkeitoch' as he was familiarly called, —meaning, 'Coll of the left hand.'

Although, in the eyes of the Highlanders, Macdonald's pedigree was not lofty enough to entitle him, when he first landed, to lead them to battle for the royal cause, he was of gentle birth, his father, Colonel Macdonald, being settled on the island of Iona, in the Western Highlands.

During Colkeitoch's absence, Montrose tried to harass his enemy's troops and weaken their resources by a species of warfare very similar to that of the 'free lances' of modern times.

He had no cavalry, but his men were so active and light-footed that they thought nothing of marching eight or nine miles at night to surprise the enemy. Montrose often returned from such expeditions not only laden with spoil, but sometimes fortunate in having taken several prisoners.

This kind of predatory warfare excited just the

feelings that Montrose intended it to do. With fifteen hundred men he thus contrived to intimidate a great tract of country, and to inspire it with the idea that he was resistless.

Such was the rapidity of our hero's movements, that his enemies constantly believed that he was near them, and on the point of being taken, when he and his Redshanks were perhaps miles off, far beyond their reach.

In the meantime, Argyle, though supposed to be in active pursuit of Montrose, had never actually confronted him in battle. Although with relentless cruelty destroying all the live stock and crops of those who had joined Montrose, Argyle still kept far behind. The Covenanting Government even murmured at the slowness of their favourite's movements, although they affected to scoff at the success of the Marquis.

His victories, the Presbyterian clergy affected to believe, were only 'permitted for a season;' for, with unflinching belief in their own cause, they claimed for Argyle's army the privilege of being 'the soldiers of God.' Strange fanaticism!

The moment, however, was rapidly advancing when Argyle should meet Montrose in battle. Strange to say, the Covenanters had crossed the Grampians, and were within two miles of the

Royalists' little army before their scouts brought word of the enemy's approach.

What was he to do? His rival's army numbered nearly four thousand strong,—a fourth of whom were horsemen, commanded by Lord Lothian, while our hero, in Macdonald's absence, could barely muster half that number; besides which, his men were almost destitute of arms and ammunition.

One moment's hesitation as to his course was followed by prompt decisive action. He disdained the idea of fortifying himself in Fyvie Castle, and determined to meet Argyle, but not on the plain. He knew that on level land the number of his enemy's men, and the superiority of well-armed and disciplined troops against his volunteers, who were, after all, only raw recruits, would tell against him; so, drawing his sword, he led the way in person to a lofty hill above the castle, where he disposed his Highlanders to the best advantage he could in the face of an enemy rapidly climbing up the uneven sides of the mountain.

The hill was rough, and divided by little mounds thrown up by those who had lately tilled the land. Montrose saw those hedges and ditches would be useful as rude fortifications for his men. The top of the hill was thickly wooded. While disposing his men on its summit, he saw two things that

might well have daunted him. He saw the few Gordons who had joined him deserting his side as soon as they discovered among Argyle's commanders Lord Huntly's two sons. He noted also, that, owing to the desperate courage with which they fought their way, several Covenanters had seized hold of the very ditches and fences he had counted upon as posts for his own troops.

The greater part of Montrose's men were utterly dismayed by the turn that fortune seemed to be taking. Had he hesitated for a moment, he would have soon found himself entirely abandoned. Raising his voice, he implored the Redshanks to remember their previous victories, and not to be dismayed at the smallness of their numbers.

His words arrested the flight of his men, and they were greatly encouraged by the firmness with which, turning to a brave Irishman named O'Ryan, Montrose, as calmly as if it were an everyday matter, bid him go and rout out the Covenanters who had taken possession of the ditches.

'Go, O'Ryan,' cried Montrose, 'take a handful of men, and drive me those fellows out of yonder ditches, that we may be no more plagued with them!'

The brave O'Ryan executed the order as calmly as it was given; and the Covenanters, dislodged

from the ditches, were soon flying in wild disorder.

The Redshanks returned in triumph to Montrose, bringing back several bags of gunpowder abandoned by the Covenanters.

This episode told greatly for Montrose. Half a general's battle and cause are won when his men are confident of success; and Montrose saw to his delight how his Redshanks cheered O'Ryan and his victorious little party when they rejoined their friends.

The men, pleased with their prize, jested about it among themselves.

'Pity,' cried one, as he handed a powder-bag, 'there were not bullets as well! Faith, we must fetch them in another bout!'

Montrose had stationed his fifty men at the top of the hill. Seeing that Lord Lothian was advancing at the head of a large body of cavalry, the Marquis of Montrose directed those of his foot who had guns, to fire at them while they were riding across a field that lay between the rival forces. The volley scared the Covenanting cavalry, who turned round and beat a hasty and disorderly retreat.

The Redshanks were delighted at this second victory; but Montrose was compelled to restrain

their ardour, by telling them to wait his commands before engaging their enemies in another conflict.

The evening shadows were falling across the hill on which our hero had made so brave a resistance, when Argyle thought prudent to retreat for the night; but knowing the Marquis's proneness to sudden surprises, he made all his men sleep under arms, and bid his scouts keep a good look-out.

From his spies he learned that Montrose was dreadfully embarrassed for want of ammunition. That was indeed the case; and so great was his want of bullets, that his men were compelled to forage among the neighbouring farm-houses for metal with which to cast them.

The supply, nevertheless, ran very short of the demand; but the Cavaliers, by their resolute manner, deterred the enemy from making any further attempt to disperse Montrose's ill-armed band.

Argyle retreated nightly across a neighbouring river; and Montrose, availing himself of a dark night towards the end of October, returned to his former position at Strathbogie, where he awaited Allaster Macdonald's return.

That place belonged to Lord Huntly, and its pleasant parks proved better quarters for the Redshanks than the wild heather-covered hills around

Fyvie. Argyle, after one or two ineffectual attempts to engage Montrose on level land, proposed a truce, and determined to try by treacherous policy to vanquish his foe.

In spite of Argyle's promise of protection should he trust himself to a personal conference, Montrose resolutely refused all offers.

Too noble to dissimulate, our hero made no secret of his intention to retreat into Badenoch, where he knew he could defy his rival.

Many of the noblemen and gentlemen who had joined the royal standard were Lowlanders, to whom the idea of wintering among bleak hills was little short of appalling. Argyle worked by his secret agents on their fears of such a hard campaign. He told them that if they submitted to him now, he would not only procure for them a full pardon, but also promotion and favours. The bait so artfully held out took with almost all the Lowland lairds.

Thus Montrose, day after day, saw some one of his party desert his camp and go over to the enemy, and soon had the additional pain of seeing Colonel Sibbald join the deserters. The hardships of a Highland winter in prospect, joined perhaps to a feeling that against a whole nation's will the struggle would be but vain, daunted all except the Earl of Airlie and his two sons, Sir Thomas and David

Ogilvie. They alone, among the many false friends, stood true to the royal cause.

Among those who went over to Argyle was one Nathaniel Gordon. His aim, however, in going, was to try and persuade Lord Lewis Gordon to join the royal side. Montrose was in the secret, and how he succeeded we shall hear later on.

Argyle set a price on Montrose's head, hoping that some simple soldier of his little army might be tempted to betray him. Not one was found base enough to sell his brave leader's life. When, however, Montrose found how many Lowland gentlemen had deserted him, he felt compelled, in order to effect a safe retreat for himself and his men, to resort to a subterfuge.

Afraid that those who had gone over to Argyle might betray his plans, he feigned to have suddenly altered his intention of wintering in the Highlands. He ordered his men to recall the baggage already sent on, and to prepare for a battle on the following day. He drew them up in battle order, and Argyle began to think that his new friends had misled him. After four days spent in thus misleading the Covenanters, Montrose marched his men off by night, and before Argyle even knew of his intention, he and his faithful Redshanks were on their way across mountains thick with snow, and along wild tracks

of country untenanted save by deer and wild game, towards the braes of Athol. Argyle having failed to perform his promise of dispersing the 'malig-nants,' and destroying Montrose, was compelled to return to Edinburgh. He tried to excuse the ignominious way in which he had conducted the campaign by boasting of his 'bloodless victories;' but while some were misled by his plausible statements, there were many disgusted at the want of courage he had shown, while the bravery of Montrose shone all the more brightly by contrast.

There is nothing so convincing as success. Men began to believe that there must be more good than they had before believed possible in a cause supported by one so noble as the illustrious Graham, and those who endured hardships with so much devotion. They contrasted his self-sacrificing character with that of the MacCailean Mor; and the royal cause once so openly scoffed at, began to receive more forbearance and respect even amongst its enemies. Men began to discuss the question more fairly, and a growing moderation towards the Cavaliers was the result.

Scarcely had the Marquis and his men, after a toilsome march, reached Badenoch, than a faithful messenger brought news of Argyle's movements.

The treacherous Covenanter had marched to Dunkeld, in the heart of the Athol country, with a view to persuading the Cavaliers to abandon the royal cause.

The city of Dunkeld was memorable as having been once the capital of ancient Caledonia,—‘the stronghold or fortress of the Gael.’ Lying in the middle of the Athol country, it served Argyle’s purpose well, when he was, with all the speciousness of his crafty nature, bent on corrupting the fidelity of its clansmen.

Dunkeld had been once, so it is said, the abode of St. Columba, when he migrated from Scotia (Ireland) and Christianized Alban (Scotland). This celebrated Saint first converted a powerful monarch, named Bruidhi, who bestowed on his deliverer from heathenism the island of Iona, that had belonged to the Druids, who were, as you of course know, heathen priests. St. Columba founded a famous monastery at Iona, and he and its abbots have Christianized all Alban.

It was probably partly owing to the religious influence of the place that round its picturesque city the clansmen were devotedly loyal. Indeed, devotion to their kings, from the earliest period to the later times, characterized the whole district.

Montrose, when told of Argyle’s position, deter-

mined to defeat his plans. He turned back with his usual rapidity, and was within sixteen miles of his rival before the latter had even heard of his approach. Argyle immediately retired into Perthshire, and Montrose lost the opportunity of deciding the contest between the two rival parties by a decisive battle. Baffled in his projected attack on the Covenanters, Montrose summoned a council of war. Allaster Macdonald had rejoined him at Blair Athol; and while waiting in that great vale to glean tidings of his faithful Colkeitch, the heroic Marquis was rewarded for his confidence in, and devotion to, the royal cause by the former's reappearance, accompanied by a numerous band of the Clanranalds, some of the Camerons and Stewarts of Appin—in all, a very considerable number.

In the midst of the lovely scenery of that part of Scotland, within sight of high mountains, rocks, and heaths, whose very names reminded the Redshanks of battles lost and won by their ancestors, Montrose solemnly consulted those who had thus bravely sided with a falling cause.

Amid those grand scenes each man spoke freely. One feeling animated all breasts as each chief and chieftain spoke in that council of war.

That feeling was *hatred of the Campbells*; for that clan, so powerful, so imperious, and so grasping, had

ruined many who that day ranged round Montrose.

The clan 'Diarmid of the Boar' were the hereditary enemies of the Macdonalds.

The Marquis was in favour of wintering with his troops in the Lowlands, in order to be more certain of obtaining provisions for his army ; but one daring voice suggested 'that to avenge all their many wrongs on Argyle, no place for the Redshanks were better chosen than *Argyle's own country*.'

The hills resounded again and again with applause at a proposal which also well suited Montrose's daring soul. 'The MacCaileam Mor should see, that those whom he termed "malignants" could harass him even where his own influence was highest!' 'They would show him how the Scottish Cavaliers could fight for honour and revenge!'

The die was cast, and it was decided that Argyle should be harassed in his own land and among his own clan.

The Lowlands were strongly garrisoned, and Presbyterian to the backbone, so the decision was a wise one. The next question was, how could the army be fed in that wild peninsular district?

To answer this question Montrose singled out of the group of excited Highlanders around him one Angus Macdonald of Glencoe.

The clansman whom he addressed was well known as a good marksman and soldier, to whom every inch of the ground was familiar.

‘I know,’ said he, ‘every farm under MacCaileam Mor, and every inch of his country. If good water, plenty of houses, and fat kine will do for you, there are plenty to be had.’

The Marquis no longer hesitated. Secure of food for his brave men, he determined to march straight into Argyleshire.

He divided his army into three bands. One, led by himself, marched from the braes of Athol by the head of Loch Tay into Argyleshire, while Allaster Macdonald and John of Moidart led the two others by different roads towards the same goal. The Redshanks, with cruel fidelity, kept their vow of vengeance. As they marched on they ravaged the whole country, burning the dwellings, eating or destroying the herds of sheep and cattle, and in the short space of six weeks, from the 13th of December 1644 to January 1645, the unfortunate inhabitants of Argyleshire suffered all the horrors of war in its worst form.

The party, guided on their way to vengeance by John of Moidart, surpassed those led by Montrose and Macdonald in the cruelties they inflicted on all whom they met.

In their ardour for revenge, they stopped not to inquire who were innocent or who were guilty. All were *Campbells*, and all were to die! The whole country was burnt and ravaged, and 695 persons were put to death by those remorseless men. There was no deed of cruelty or violence ever practised by the Campbells that was unrevenged; and laden with spoil—for on one foray as many as a thousand head of cattle were seized—the Highlanders marched on to Inveraray.

What was the MacCaileam Mor about, and why did he allow this rapid attack on his country? He was living in his own castle of Inveraray, making great efforts to enlist his clan, and busied with the arrangements for a meeting he had summoned from far and near of all the Campbell tribe.

He had been told, but had scoffed at the very idea of the Marquis's invasion of his territory.

While he was living quietly in his strong castle, flattering himself no enemy could possibly find out the secret of those rocky passes that securely guarded, as he imagined, his native land (for he was accustomed to say that they were impregnable, 'nor would he have them known for a hundred thousand crowns'), an enemy whom he fondly believed far distant was rapidly advancing; and it was not till Montrose was actually within two

miles of his fortress that the MacCaileam Mor realized his danger.

He learned his danger from the cowherds of the neighbouring hills. In fear and trembling they told their great chieftain of his rival's vicinity.

No thought of his defenceless clansmen, no pity for those on whom his own cruel deeds had recoiled with such fearful severity, stayed the cowardly chief. Leaving his clan to their fate, he escaped in a fishing boat on Loch Fyne, and fled into the Lowlands. He went to Dumbarton, and met a body of troops hastily recalled by the Edinburgh Government from England to aid in quelling this formidable insurrection. When once more in a place of safety, Argyle boasted of his intention of leaving no stone unturned till he had crushed Montrose. In conjunction with General Baillie, he drew up a scheme which was destined to destroy the Cavaliers.

At the head of a force of about three thousand men, Argyle was to pursue Montrose, while Baillie, leading another force, was, by making a detour, to encounter the Marquis's advanced guard, and thus by hemming him in on both sides prevent his escape in any direction.

Lord Seaforth and the Frasers were on the Covenanters' side, and would therefore guard the north, near Inverness.

Argyle's clan were beginning to despise his military prowess, while his character for personal courage had sorely suffered from his precipitate flight from Inveraray. In order to inspire his followers with confidence, the crafty Lord recalled his brave cousin Sir Duncan Campbell of Auchinbreck from Ireland, by dint of whose reputation as a soldier Argyle recovered his lost ground with his own clan.

Montrose, in the meantime, was reaping the fruits of the character for bravery that he had acquired; his name inspiring terror throughout Argyllshire.

To obtain a name as one who was invincible, the naturally kind-hearted Montrose had permitted the cruelties that for several weeks his relentless followers practised on the Campbells. That conduct cannot be defended even by his warmest admirers.

The vengeance wreaked so unmercifully on the women and children of their enemies is a great stain on the memory of Montrose. Although supported by those whose motives for doing so were strongly influenced by hatred of the Campbells, Montrose had probably but little choice in the matter, and was compelled to permit many wanton cruelties.

Fortunately for the King's little army, the season

had been remarkably good. Had Montrose and his men had to endure the hardships of snow and cold, the sequel to his enterprise might have been very different. Had Argyle, too, but possessed the ordinary courage of his race and stood his ground, Montrose would have scarcely escaped ; for to those who knew the mountain passes of Argyllshire, it was indeed a matter of surprise that the Mac-Caileam Mor had attempted no resistance. Such was the nature of that mountainous tract, a hundred men, commanded by a brave leader, had kept all their foes at bay.

Montrose was by no means in ignorance of his enemy's schemes for his destruction.

His scouts brought him word at Loch Ness, where, after leaving Argyllshire, he had quartered himself, that the Earl of Seaforth, although by no means unfriendly to the King's cause, had enlisted a large body of men against him, and was awaiting him at Inverness.

Montrose, although his own little army barely numbered fifteen hundred men, determined to attack Seaforth's larger force at Inverness. So he marched towards that city through the valley of Albin.

On his road he was overtaken by a Highlander, Ian Lorn Macdonnell, a celebrated bard of the



Montrose receives important intelligence.—*Page 98.*

Keppoch family. He hastened to Montrose, and bid him listen to his tale.

‘The great MacCaileam Mor,’ said the breathless bard, ‘pursues thee! He is followed by his tribe, and many other Highlanders. He is ravaging South Lochaber, and burning down every house he comes to, and boasts that he will return to tell the tale of thy destruction!’

Montrose flushed with surprise and indignation. He refused to believe the tale.

‘He dares not pursue me through Lochaber,’ he cried. After pondering, however, a few minutes, he summoned the chiefs of his army to a conference. They agreed with him in thinking the tale improbable; but that were it true, Montrose’s only course was to desist from his projected attack on Inverness, and to double back upon his foe.

Although at first incredulous, after a little reflection Montrose began to believe the bard’s tale as consistent with the idea that Argyle would fain entrap him by coming up in the rear, while the vanguard of his army were engaged in battle with Seaforth’s powerful troops, most of whom were well-disciplined soldiers from the Inverness garrison.

Sternly directing the clansmen around him to bind the messenger with stout cords,—‘for,’ said Montrose to Ian Lorn, ‘if your news, Sir Bard, be

false, you shall be shot at the head of the column,'—he turned round to find his way over the wild mountain, in order that Argyle might gain no knowledge of his intentions.

Ian Lorn had told him that Argyle had halted close to Loch Eil, in a strong fortress called Inverlochy, close to the sea.

Two short days only did the Scottish Cavaliers take before the old fortress frowned before them, to recompense them for their arduous march, as, guided by Ian Lorn across snow-girt hills and frozen moors, they glided along more swiftly almost than the startled herds of wild deer which, at sight of those 'kilted laddies,' fled along the wild passes before them.

This march of thirty miles, however, being happily ended in safety, the poet guide demanded his freedom and a recompense from Montrose. It was night when Ian Lorn received his guerdon, so richly earned, from Montrose.

It was a moment for a painter to delineate, or a poet to describe. The moonlight lighted up the rugged rocks around Montrose's wearied men, who *dared* not rest; for although the Cavaliers, by killing his scouts, had almost reached Argyle's camp before he knew of their dread vicinity, the rays of the moon on that clear frosty night had disclosed the

secret of their presence to the enemy who were encamped before them.

‘Ian Lorn,’ said the great Marquis, ‘never bard has won his “brogue money” better than thou. Wilt thou fight by my side?’

‘I cannot, my Lord,’ replied Ian Lorn; ‘but fight to-day, and to-morrow I will tell you what you have done.’

Argyle’s craven heart again failed him. Under pretence that he was too indisposed after a fall to fight, he hastily went on board a vessel that lay conveniently at hand, and issued his commands to his men from that place of safety.

They, worthy of a better leader, were no cowards. They determined to meet their foe with valour, although during the night no one suspected that Montrose was with those tartaned warriors who were waiting only till daybreak to attack them.

From the mountain above, the faithful bard, who had been the means of guiding Montrose’s army to the spot, watched the battle.

He saw first the sun slowly rising in the east, lighting up with golden splendour the fine scenery around. It was alone enough to kindle poetic ardour; but as he gazed below him, he marked the battle begin that was to determine the fate of a king’s right against a nation’s might. It

was Sunday morning, the second of February 1645.

Unfortunately for the brave Campbells, Argyle had neglected the opportunity afforded him by the darkness of concentrating all his forces. The River Lochy, a deep rapid stream, divided his army, which, if united, had perchance coped better with the Redshanks; but Argyle had refused to believe that it were a well-organized force that lay watching his camp that bright moonlight night. It was not till a loud shrill trumpet, sounding clear and louder through the mountain air, saluted the Dictator's ear that he believed in the presence of Montrose.

His cheek paled and his craven heart trembled at the blast. His clansmen might wonder at the sound, never perchance heard by them before; but the MacCaileam Mor knew that it was intended as a salute to the standard of a king whom he had betrayed.

The morning mists obscure for a few minutes Ian Lorn's view of that historic scene. He supports himself by a stout heather twig, as in his anxiety he strains his eyeballs to watch the battle.

'By heavens! they fight at last,' he exclaims, as, attacked by the flower of the Campbells, the brave O'Ryan meets the first attack at the head of the Cavaliers.

A moment before, the bard's eager eyes have seen a white flag of truce advancing from Argyle's side ; but it was disregarded by Montrose's men, who broke off with impetuosity to meet the charge.

The Campbells had fired on Montrose's soldiers ; but when the latter saw that they had muskets, they rushed all the wilder on. Destitute of powder, they drew their claymores and closed with the enemy, who, daunted by so unexpected an assault, fled in every direction.

Argyle's troops were stationed on the gentle ascent that led to the castle of Inverlochy, which was flanked by the loch behind, on the waters of which Argyle watched the conflict. The River Lochy at that point joins an arm of the sea called Loch Eil ; and when the Lowlanders, who formed the right and left wings of the Covenanters' army, saw Montrose's men rush wildly, claymore in hand, towards them, they threw down their guns and fled in a panic, pursued for upwards of nine miles by the Redshanks.

Some fled towards the square towers of the castle behind them ; others ran wildly down towards the beach, in the vain hope of saving themselves by means of a number of small fishing smacks that lay moored along the sea-shore. Argyle, as he watched those wild Highlanders massacre his fly-

ing men, might well congratulate himself that he was safe on board his vessel.

The body of many a brave Campbell floated round the bark that held the Covenanting chief; but eager to place his own person in safety, he stopped not to pity or to save. He gazed not with remorse on the upturned dead faces, but hastily ordering the sailors to set sail, he departed to seek a place of greater security.

The carnage that ensued was horrible and long. Fifteen hundred Campbells perished that day, although Montrose would fain have saved the lives of many a valiant gentleman who had fought for the poltroon Argyle.

The castle surrendered. Montrose treated all within its walls with great kindness. On his side the number of the killed and wounded was comparatively small; but after the battle, the brave Sir Thomas Ogilvie died of his wounds. He had been one of the truest and best friends Montrose ever possessed.

The Redshanks, after pursuing the enemy, turned back to get what food they could for their mid-day meal. To cook such food as they had found they needed utensils, and a party sallied forth to find some pots in the peasants' houses.

Allaster Macdonald, however, had failed to get a

pot, and one of his men, approaching a party of Highlanders seated round a fire, begged for a loan of one. The men, reluctant to offend the general, were just going to give up their pot, when Robertson, one of their number, remonstrated.

‘Tell the general,’ said he, ‘I wouldn’t give it up. Why should he spoil our breakfast? I am as good a man as he. If he killed twenty men, I killed nineteen.’

The messenger returned to the general, who was too high-minded to be angry with Robertson, whom he tried to find out. The latter, much as he had boasted of his prowess, was really a modest man. He felt dreadfully afraid of meeting the general after his daring message, and glided away the moment he saw him approaching. Allaster, however, determined to see so brave a man, and presently overtaking him, demanded his name.

‘’Tis not worthy to be named,’ said Robertson, ‘among those of the brave men who fought to-day.’

Pressed, however, by Allaster, he said—

‘I am only a poor tinker among the Athol men.’

‘Would to God,’ cried Allaster, ‘the Athol men had been all tinkers this day.’ Robertson’s descendants still call themselves, with great pride, the race ‘of the Tinker.’

Allaster was noted alike for his courage and

strength of hand. With one blow he could strike a single enemy dead. He was therefore greatly admired by the Redshanks.

Unhappily in his case courage was not tempered by mercy. He hated the Campbells with a hatred that led him to commit the most cruel deeds ; and his vindictive feelings towards that tribe had doubtless made him take up arms against the Covenanters.

The part he took led to the imprisonment of his father and two brothers, who, at the very time of the battle of Inverlochy, were captives in Edinburgh. The Campbells, not content with punishing Allaster Macdonald's relations, had behaved with the greatest brutality to his foster-nurse.

A Highlander especially reverences his foster-mother ; and when Allaster heard of the indignity with which she had been treated, he vowed he would revenge her wrongs. This is how he kept his word:—

The battle was over, and the Redshanks were returning from the pursuit at evening, bringing back many prisoners. Montrose did all he could to save the lives of some honourable men, but he was successful in few instances, for the carnage had been dreadful. Among the Campbells was the brave old Colonel Campbell of Auchinbreck, a kinsman of Argyle. When Allaster Macdonald saw

Colonel Campbell led in between two Highlanders, a ghastly purpose crossed his mind. The latter, a fine courteous soldier, recognised Macdonald, and to conciliate his victor, alluded to a 'cousinship' that existed between them; but Allaster saw through him.

'I know you to be a gentleman,' said he, 'both a laird and a soldier of Auchinbreck, in Scotland, and therefore I mean to treat you well.'

Auchinbreck began to hope that he had really escaped his doom, and he thanked his conqueror.

'Which do you choose,' said Allaster; 'to die by hanging, or to be beheaded?'

'Alas!' said the old Colonel, 'it's two bads without one choice!'

Allaster MacCol beheaded the unfortunate old soldier with one sweep of the gigantic sword.

Dreadful is war that has power to rouse such revengeful feelings. This murder—for it can be called nothing else—is a great blot on the Cavaliers' fame. The Campbells had been cruel, traitorous, and treacherous, but nothing justified the cruelties practised on them in return.

'Fallen race of Diarmid ! disloyal, untrue,
No harp in the Highlands will sorrow for you ;
But the birds of Loch Eil are wheeling on high,
And the Badenoch wolves hear the Cameron's cry,—
"Come feast ye ! come feast where the false-hearted lie !"'

The wrongs of the race so long oppressed by Argyle's tribe were cruelly revenged that day. The battle of Inverlochy produced the effect on Scotland that Montrose had anticipated.

In vain Argyle, parading his arm in a sling, to show that an accident had prevented his fighting in person, so perverted the truth in recounting the reasons of his retreat, that instead of branding his name as a coward, the Edinburgh Covenanters even thanked him for his services. Throughout the length and breadth of the Highlands, Montrose was celebrated as a hero who had defeated one of the three large armies sent against him.

He had aspired to reduce his native but rebellious land to obedience. The idea was romantic, noble, and brave, but it ultimately failed for lack of the co-operation of many who, though at heart no Covenanters, dreaded the evils that Charles the First, through his weakness as a king, had brought upon their country; nevertheless, such was the panic that the battle of Inverlochy produced, that had Montrose pushed on to Edinburgh, he would probably have met with but slight resistance.

He mistrusted the fighting powers of the Highlanders, and feared lest, removed from their mountains, the very sight of whose snow-clad peaks seemed to rouse their souls to the performance of

great deeds, they might be crushed when led against armies of well-organized troops. He accordingly, after resting a few days, turned northwards, and once more found himself and his men quartered at Loch Ness.

Loch Ness, the second largest lake in Scotland, takes its name, 'the loch above the waterfall,' from the Ness, which falls from a great height into its waters. It is in a valley called 'the great vale of Alban,' along which are the remains of some very ancient forts, used, it is believed, as early as the days of the Pictish kings as places for watchfires or beacons. He then marched on, always in a northerly direction, till he came to the River Spey. Montrose laid waste all the lands he passed on his road ; and although he was too humane to allow such violence, he had but little choice. Argyle had ravaged the lands of the Royalists, and a system of retaliation was all that Montrose's friends and followers cared for. Had the King's noble champion dared for one moment to check his followers, he would soon have found himself utterly deserted. Revenge was the predominant motive that animated the Redshanks, and the Marquis, unable to repress, was constrained into permitting their cruelties.

Fiercely had the fiery cross aroused those brave but pitiless warriors !

It was a war of fire and bloodshed ; and the track of the Cavaliers, as they marched towards Elgin, was marked by devastated fields, ruined homesteads, fire, rapine, and cruelty. Mothers clasped their children closer to their bosoms as the dread name 'Montrose' was named ; and such was the terror he inspired, that even the stern rulers of the land forebore to execute the unfortunate Royalists who had fallen into their hands.

Montrose had two motives for directing his course towards Elgin. He heard that a body of soldiers, officered by several leading men, were being armed against the royal cause, and he thought it not unlikely that as soon as it was known how completely he had defeated Argyle, many would flock to his standard and join his side.

Then he knew that if he attempted to take Inverness, he ran great risk of being defeated, as that city was well garrisoned, and would not easily surrender. A great many gentlemen, however, joined Montrose ; among them the Laird of Grant with three hundred men, Sir Robert Gordon and the Earl of Seaforth, who at the head of a large force had recently been employed by the Covenanters to arrest his progress.

As these gentlemen were influential in their own part of Scotland, their example had great weight

with others; and every day the camp of Montrose received fresh reinforcements.

The gentlemen of Moray voluntarily dispersed as the Cavaliers approached Elgin; they first, however, sent a deputation to Montrose to entreat his good offices. To these he had replied, that his only terms were 'submission to the King and his lieutenant.'

Elgin, which he reached on the 14th of February, readily submitted to Montrose.

When, as already stated, the Marquis first contemplated the romantic scheme of raising the Highlands in Charles's favour, he had hoped much from the Gordons, and was greatly disappointed to find that gallant race holding aloof. His delight was therefore great, when, on the very day after he entered the now deserted Elgin, he was joined by Lord Gordon, the Marquis of Huntly's eldest son.

Lord Gordon, disgusted with Argyle's conduct, had shaken of the trammels of the Covenanting party, which up to that time he had reluctantly joined, and now openly declared himself a Royalist.

This young nobleman could not bring a great many adherents to the royal cause, but his example was followed by his brother Lord Lewis; and both were graciously welcomed by Montrose.

Early in March, the Marquis and his Redshanks—

their numbers greatly augmented by the Gordons and Grants, who had subsequently joined—crossed the River Spey, where he was joined by many independent gentlemen of Banffshire and Aberdeenshire. Those who would not run the risk of drawing down the wrath of the Covenanters by an open declaration for the King, were allowed to go free, provided they promised not to fight against him. This promise, held sacred by many, was broken by the Earl of Seaforth, who shortly afterwards deserted the Cavaliers. He had merely joined the Cavaliers from motives of expediency; and when all fears for his own personal safety were removed by their absence from his country, he deserted them.

The news of the Cavaliers' doings in the north at last aroused the worst fears of the Edinburgh Government. No longer blinded to their danger by Argyle, they hastily summoned General Baillie from England, and ordered Sir John Hurry to take the immediate command of the army in the north, and rid them, if possible, of the terrible Montrose.

The soldier to whom these orders were given was a famous general, who had been knighted in 1643 by King Charles, soon after he had quitted the Covenanters; although he very soon changed sides again, and after a very brief service under Prince

Rupert, Charles's nephew, went over to the Presbyterians.

Although so unstable, Sir John Hurry was an able and daring soldier. He commanded a fine body of cavalry, and marched rapidly after the Cavaliers ; the Edinburgh Government meanwhile appointing three committees to regulate military matters. Argyle, keeping his influence in spite of his recent failures, headed one of them ; the Earl of Lanerick, Hamilton's brother, another ; and Balmerino and Lindsay the third.

Montrose was visited at this time with a domestic affliction in the death of his eldest son, a fine lad of fifteen, who succumbed to the hardships of a winter's campaign, and died after a few days' illness at Gordon Castle. Gordon Castle was then called the Bog of Gight, and was commanded by a spirited man, one of the 'gay Gordons,' who did all that lay in his power to induce the whole of his clan to join Montrose.

Among them was a brave but daring Cavalier named Nathaniel Gordon, who had been the means of winning Lord Gordon over to the royal cause. When traversing Banffshire and Aberdeen, Montrose sent this brave Nathaniel Gordon to Aberdeen to demand men, horses, and money.

Gordon feared no Covenanter ; but his reckless

bravery cost the royal cause very dearly. He took with him to Aberdeen a Mr. Donald Farquharson of Braemar, one of the bravest Highland gentlemen in the royal army. This gallant gentleman belonged to a gallant race whose clan also inhabited Balmoral, in Aberdeenshire,—a place now familiar to us all,—and whose Gaelic name, ‘Baile-na-morail,’ means ‘majestic town.’ This gallant chief, after doing his duty in helping Gordon to perform Montrose’s commission, wishing to enjoy himself, threw aside his plaid, put on a rich suit, and ‘made merry’ with his comrades. The citizens of Aberdeen were supposed to be so overawed by the terror of Montrose’s name, that the Cavaliers imprudently neglected to post sentinels outside the banqueting hall, where, gaily attired, they were feasting and enjoying good wine, provided at the town’s expense.

Whether or not some citizen, determined to betray them, had given Sir John Hurry notice of their vicinity, is not really known ; but while feasting and singing, the Cavaliers were hurriedly warned that Hurry, followed by about a hundred and sixty men, was coming rapidly towards their rendezvous.

Farquharson, rushing to the door, was met by the Covenanters, who instantly killed him ; and tearing off his rich clothes, threw his dead body naked into the streets.

Gordon and a few of the party escaped, though forced to fly on foot, leaving some valuable horses behind them ; but the greater number of the Cavaliers were captured and carried off to Edinburgh, where they were thrown into the Tolbooth, to be punished according to the pleasure of the Covenanters.

The citizens of Aberdeen were greatly alarmed at this tragical event, lest Montrose should vent his anger on their city ; but although he made them pay a fine, he respected their liberties.

This trouble, involving the loss of so brave a gentleman as Donald Farquharson, was not the only one that happened in that month. Sir John Hurry, not content with his dashing exploit at Aberdeen, managed to get hold of Montrose's second son, a boy of fourteen, who was at school at Montrose. Both he and his tutor were sent to the Edinburgh Tolbooth, in hopes of intimidating his father. But if they hoped to quench the high spirit of Montrose, they were mistaken. Grieving sorely at the loss of his children, he yet pursued his course ; and after burning and laying waste the lands about Stonehaven and Dunnottar,—the latter place belonging to Earl Marischal, who would not join him,—he passed the Grampian Hills, and encamped seven miles from Sir John Hurry's quarters near Brechin.



CHAPTER IV.

'Let the ancient hills of Scotland
Hear once more the battle song
Swell within their glens and valleys,
As the clansmen march along.'

—AYTOUN.

SIR JOHN HURRY, with a fine body of cavalry, and being a very skilful general, counted on an easy victory over Montrose.

He thought that could he but once meet him on level ground, away from the mountains, he must surely defeat an enemy so ill provided with troops. His scouts brought word that the Redshanks were quartered at Fettercairn, a village about eight miles from his own camp.

The Marquis hearing that Hurry intended to fight, determined to lay a trap for him. He had only two hundred horsemen, and these he placed in front of all his army. His foot were artfully concealed in a hollow; so that when Sir John rode up at the head of his regulars, only seeing so small a

number of men, he fancied that Montrose would soon be routed.

‘Fire!’ cried he to his men, who at once charged. But scarcely had they done so, when up jumped a large body of Redshanks, and advancing on Hurry’s men, gave them such a warm reception, that they were compelled to sound a hasty retreat.

Hurry, however, was no coward like Argyle, for he fought bravely in the rear of his army, and retreated his men in good order across the River Esk. But his defeat taught him to respect Montrose’s warlike abilities as much as he had previously despised them.

Another general was soon to measure his strength against Montrose,—that was Baillie, who had a very large force under him, and had been specially summoned from England to crush the ‘malignant’ army. He quitted Perth in March, and advanced to meet Montrose on his road from Brechin.

The two armies sighted each other near the River Isla, whose waters divided their hostile forces. For four days and five nights they gazed impatiently upon each other’s ranks, the river dividing them.

Nothing could be more trying to the impetuous spirit of Montrose. He sent a message to Baillie, that he longed to give him battle.

‘Pledge me your honour,’ said Montrose, ‘to fight,

and I will permit your whole force to pass safely over the stream, or I will meet you on the other side!’

‘Tell Montrose,’ replied Baillie, ‘that I will fight at my own time and in my own way, without asking his leave!’

The armies retreated without encountering each other in battle,—a result highly galling to Montrose, who longed for another conflict with his enemies.

After escaping again in a surprising manner from Hurry and Baillie, Montrose retreated to Dunkeld, where he planned an enterprise that once more nearly proved fatal to his cause.

In the first place, unknown to his brother, Lord Lewis Gordon suddenly deserted the royal standard, and disappeared from Montrose’s camp, accompanied by a good many Gordons, and went over to the enemy. This young nobleman was by nature so volatile that his support could not be relied upon; but many believed he was acting under instructions from the Marquis of Huntly, his father, who would not be induced to give Montrose his support. Be that as it might, for it has never been really proved against the Marquis of Huntly that he acted treacherously, Lord Lewis’s desertion came at a critical moment, and Montrose determined to retreat northwards, in order to recruit his weakened forces.

He was on his way northwards when his scouts, flying back, brought word that the Covenanters had crossed the Tay, south of Perth. Believing that his way to it was therefore clear, our hero determined to make a raid on Dundee, which he looked upon as a most disloyal city. He sent all his heavy baggage and the weakest of his little army to Brechin, and ordered them to await him there.

One fine April morning, Montrose, at the head of six hundred Highlanders and about a hundred and fifty horsemen, appeared on a hill overlooking Dundee, and sent a messenger to demand its capitulation, in 'the name of the King.'

Receiving no reply, and from his messenger not returning, Montrose knew that they had carried out their usual course and thrown him into prison. Irritated at resistance, the Marquis let loose his Redshanks, eager as bloodhounds to scent blood. The citizens made a kind of defence, but Allaster Macdonald and Lord Gordon stormed the place in three directions, and soon entered Dundee.

The townspeople were well punished for resistance. Once inside Dundee, the Irish brigade and clansmen took possession of the church and public places. The burghers were beaten back, and a scene of great pillage followed. Montrose, from a neighbouring height, made no effort to stop the course

of their fury, for Dundee had offended him, and he suffered it to be punished.

Feasting and drinking, the Highlanders and Irish were regaling themselves on the spoils they found in that rich town, when Montrose was warned by his scouts that Hurry and Baillie, with an army twice as numerous as his own, were but eight miles off, hastening to the relief of Dundee.

What was to be done? All his troops, with but one trifling exception, were inside Dundee, drinking, pillaging, and storming. His friends urged him to ensure his own safety by flight. The noble spirit of Montrose at once repudiated the idea of abandoning his Redshanks to their fate.

There was little time for action, but much danger in the task. Ordering the trumpets to be sounded, he hastily recalled the revellers; and by dint of the greatest personal exertions, got nearly all his intoxicated men to march out before the enemy arrived in sight. So thoroughly had he been surprised, however, that the Covenanters were positively entering one gate of Dundee as the last of the clansmen defiled past their chivalrous leader through another.

He sent his men forward in two bodies, guarding the rear with his cavalry. The sun was setting as the Cavaliers quitted Dundee. The Covenanters

immediately pursued them, Baillie sending part of his forces round to attack the Royalists in flank, while Hurry was to engage them in the rear.

Never had Montrose been nearer falling into the hands of his enemies. To stimulate their soldiers to the pursuit, the Parliamentary generals set a price on the gallant Graham's head.

Although Hurry's horse made several attacks on the Earl of Montrose's army, they were kept at bay by the determined resistance of the Redshanks; and night falling, the Parliamentarians abandoned the pursuit, and retired to the main body of the army.

Although Montrose had retreated in time, it was indeed an arduous march that lay before him, were his men to reach the sea-coast before day should dawn. They, however, marched boldly on, and reached Arbroath, seventeen miles from Dundee, before daybreak.

Numerous were Montrose's difficulties in returning to the mountains. He knew that Baillie would suspect his design, and endeavour to cut off every road to the hills.

While their leader was pondering over his position at Arbroath, the weary Highlanders lay down to rest, thoroughly exhausted by the fatigues of the eventful day.

To rest was fatal. Daybreak would find their

pursuers upon them if they slept even for an hour. Appealing to their attachment to himself, and rousing the slumberers, Montrose and his chieftains urged on their men.

Montrose formed a daring plan. He doubled upon those in pursuit of him, and before morning the distant Grampian hills rose before his eyes but three or four miles off. They were safe. In those beloved mountains they could hide if too sorely pressed. Safe at length in the depths of Glen Esk, Montrose then, deeply moved at the sufferings of his Highlanders—who had marched without rest or food for sixty miles—stopped in that romantic place to restore his troops.

The chiefs once more met in council. Lord Gordon, eager to clear himself of any complicity in his brother Lewis's desertion, volunteered to return into his own country and there recruit for the King's service. He was, indeed, anxious to return, for he was fearful that Hurry, in revenge for his adherence to the Royal cause, might take advantage of his absence to ravage his country.

Accordingly, the gallant young nobleman left Montrose in the mountains; and Allaster Macdonald was sent farther north for fresh recruits, while another chief proceeded to Athol to raise, if possible, more volunteers.

The Marquis himself was then left alone, with a small force of only five hundred foot and fifty horse.

After sending off a messenger in disguise to the King, Montrose, instead of remaining inactive in the hills, suddenly reappeared, to the astonishment of Hurry and Baillie, who had stated that the greater part of his army had been annihilated, and himself skulking in the Grampians. They were soon made to retract their words. Sir John Hurry had been sent by the committee, at the head of another large army, into Aberdeen and its neighbourhood, to direct his strength against Lord Gordon in the north.

General Baillie remained at Perth to be ready to assist, if necessary, Sir John Hurry's army.

If the Covenanters fancied Montrose would have remained inactive, they were grievously mistaken. The Marquis had determined on a daring enterprise,—no less than a descent on the Lowlands. He had also a double motive, which was to harass his enemies and keep them occupied in watching his movements, while his friends were scouring Scotland for further aid.

Baillie, hearing from his spies that Montrose was quartered at Crieff, determined to try and surprise him. He set out at night, and reached Montrose's camp at daybreak. The Marquis had been warned

of his approach ; and finding that the Parliamentary army was five times larger than his own, ordered his men to retreat, while, at the head of his cavalry, he rode forward to keep the enemy at bay while his foot reached the pass of Ern in safety.

There, on the scene of many an ancient battle,—for Strathearn in Perthshire is the site of three large camps erected by Agricola when the Romans first visited Britain,—Montrose rested for a night. Next day he and his daring band were marching towards Loch Katrine.

From that lovely spot he proceeded to Loch Ard, having effected a meeting with the Marquis of Huntly's second son, Viscount Aboyne, who, after hesitating about joining Montrose, had at length escaped from England to fight under the King's banner.

Montrose, however, could not linger where he was ; for he soon heard ill-tidings of Lord Gordon in the north. Hurry, finding that Lord Gordon persisted in his adherence to the King, threatened him and all his clan with destruction at Auchindoun in the north. Montrose therefore determined to set off to the rescue.

Besides Lord Aboyne, our hero was now joined by two noble youths who had managed to escape out of Edinburgh. They were his two nephews,

the Master of Napier and the young Laird of Keir. The Government in Edinburgh had not been ashamed to punish the Marquis by imprisoning and ill-treating his relations. Young Napier was only just twenty-one. He had been married at the early age of sixteen, and was son of Montrose's great friend Lord Napier.

Montrose, by a rapid march, succeeded in joining Lord Gordon; and Sir John Hurry was startled early in May to find him close to his camp in Strathbogie.

Rather than meet Montrose in battle before reinforcements should arrive, Hurry crossed the Spey and retreated to Elgin, the Cavaliers in full chase. Montrose was very ill provided with ammunition; but Lord Gordon, with great gallantry, had procured a fresh supply by boarding two ships laden with gunpowder in the port of Aberdeen.

Montrose encamped at a village called Auldearn, where, happily, he had the aid of Allaster Macdonald, who had rejoined his leader with his men.

Sir John Hurry had been joined by the Earls of Seaforth and Sutherland, and a large reinforcement in the clan Fraser, with several men belonging to Moray and Caithness.

Besides this considerable force, the regular troops commanded by Hurry were well-disciplined and

drilled men-at-arms. The Marquis therefore seeing that he had a well-provided army opposed to him, would gladly have avoided a battle, but he dared not do so, hearing that Baillie, with a far larger body of men, was on his road to the Spey, prepared to intercept his retreat should he attempt one.

It is the peculiarity of all greatness of mind to rise to an emergency. Montrose might well doubt the issue, but he did not shirk a battle. He committed the fate of his little band to Providence, and prepared for the enemy's assault.

He drew up his men in a valley between the town and a few small hills behind. The rugged ascent of the hill upon which the hamlet was built he turned to advantage by stationing on it a few pieces of cannon, telling his men to entrench themselves in a number of dykes that ran along its side.

Allaster Macdonald and his men he stationed near some uneven ground opposite the enemy's left wing, telling him to maintain that secure position, and act as a reserve in case of need.

To the brave Colkeitoch he confided the royal standard, a large yellow flag, intending to mislead his antagonists by inducing them to attack the place, which the Marquis knew was impregnable, if steadily kept by Macdonald's brigade.

Sir John Hurry, seeing the standard displayed, did exactly as Montrose had anticipated ; and Colkeitch, roused by the attack to fury, forgot his general's orders, left his position, and was instantly beset and almost enclosed by a large body of the enemy's foot and horse.

The battle raged loud and fiercely ; but unfortunately for Macdonald, he had exchanged ninety of his veteran Irish for the same number of men under Lord Gordon, just as the fighting commenced.

Allaster was forming his men in battle array, when a message was brought him from Lord Gordon.

'Macdonald,' said the missive, 'there was once a bond between your ancestors and mine. The bond said that our forefathers should strike no blow at each other, whatever might be the quarrel between the other parts of the realm. None excelled *our* forefathers in renown ; let us therefore, by exchanging men, renew this bond, on this the first day's fight, beneath this banner, for my country and my King !'

The few fighting men sent him by Lord Gordon were but a sorry exchange for his own trusty veterans. They were principally young recruits, and it needed all Allaster's great heroism to pre-

vent their dispersion ; for, ill at ease, they did not fight well under their new leader, and Macdonald's men, who were in their rear and van, had to force them to stand the shower of arrows that saluted them from the enemy's quarter.

Allaster, compelled to sound a retreat to the position that he had so imprudently abandoned, ordered them back to the garden in which Montrose had placed them. Protecting himself with a large shield, he fought most gallantly to cover his men's retreat. He parried the spears of the enemy with an immense sword that he wielded with prodigious strength, and one by one he thrust his attackers back till every one of his men were safe in the garden. Just at that moment his sword—the trusty weapon that had stood him in such good stead—broke in his hand. His brother-in-law, handing him his, fell mortally wounded.

The conflict was thus proceeding, Colkeitoch fighting like a lion, when Montrose, watching the battle from the height on which the village lay, hears a murmur round him.

‘Macdonald is being routed ! his men are in flight.’

Quick as lightning Montrose cried out, ‘Macdonald is gaining the victory single-handed !’

Lord Gordon stood near him, and Montrose,

turning to him, cried out, 'What, my Lord! shall all the Gordons stand by and win no laurels for their clan? Up, men, and charge the troops Macdonald has defeated!'

Montrose's ready wit saved the day. Mingling the ringing sound of the Gordons' war-cry to that of the Macdonalds', 'Traoch eilean!' 'Fraoch eilean!' on rushed the men of Huntly and Strathbogie, and Hurry's soldiers were driven off the field.

The loss on the Covenanters' side was tremendous. Pursuing their enemy for miles, the Redshanks fought with valour, and slew all they captured. Three thousand of Sir John Hurry's experienced troops were thus scattered by the Cavaliers, while he himself was forced to fly for his life.

The honours of the day were divided between the Macdonalds and the Gordons; and Montrose is said to have declared that he had never witnessed a scene of greater slaughter, greater valour, nor greater feats of arms, than those performed by Nathaniel Gordon, Ronald Macdonald, and Lord Gordon in that bloody battle of Auldearn.

Twelve hundred men belonging to Hurry's army were slain, while on Montrose's side the loss was comparatively insignificant, although many were

badly wounded. The number of Frasers who were killed at Auldearn was so great, that, without reckoning the unmarried men who fell, it was said that the battle 'made eighty-seven widows alone in the lordship of Lovat.'

Hurry's army having lost their baggage, provisions, and standard, retreated, but in a very disorderly manner, to Inverness, where its leader tried a Captain Drummond by court-martial, and shot him, for having purposely led the company he commanded to the wrong side, and for being in communication with Montrose. They tried to fix on Drummond the disgrace of their terrible defeat.

Very soon after the battle of Inverlochy, Montrose had despatched a letter to the King in England. It was very difficult to get letters safely conveyed to Charles. To be the bearer of such missives was a service of great danger. A Scottish gentleman named Small, from devotion to Montrose and the royal cause, had volunteered to carry a packet to the Marquis, and succeeded in delivering it. This service was one of danger, and was accomplished by Small disguised as a beggar. Unhappily his disguise failed him; for, while returning to England with letters from Montrose to the King, he was betrayed to the Covenanters, and hanged at Edinburgh. His courage well deserved a happier fate.

The letters that James Small was taking so faithfully to the King, falling into the wrong hands, betrayed all that unhappy monarch's schemes to his enemies.

When they found that Montrose was urging Charles to join him in Scotland, they redoubled all their endeavours to crush the Cavaliers. That, however, was by no means an easy task; for, having for the fourth time defeated the Covenanters, Montrose perpetually baffled and perplexed their generals with his erratic marches. His perfect knowledge of the Highlands greatly aided him; and no doubt his ultimate success would have been far greater, but for the fatal habit of the clansmen, of dispersing with their spoils whenever any great raid or battle had been made, fought, or won.

The Cavaliers were thus constantly exposed to the loss of many men; and although the deserters invariably returned, Montrose was in consequence frequently at great disadvantage from the uncertainty of retaining his men.

Soon after, traversing the Spey, Montrose learnt from his scouts the near vicinity of General Baillie, who had rapidly advanced after Sir John Hurry's defeat.

The latter brave officer was eager again to meet

Montrose in battle, and if he could, to efface the disgrace of his recent defeat.

The armies of the Covenanters were accompanied on their march by civilians, delegated by the Government to watch the course of events, and direct them.

In vain General Baillie urged on those gentlemen that his men were but young recruits, dispirited by Sir John Hurry's defeat; and that it were better to delay encountering Montrose's veteran soldiers, flushed with victory. He was ordered at all risks to fight.

The popular leaders were beginning to realize the value of military fame. Even those Highland gentlemen who had hitherto supported the Covenant, were wavering at the report of those dazzling exploits performed by the Cavaliers; and every victory gained by 'the great Marquis' added to the danger of the Presbyterian cause.

General Baillie was therefore sternly ordered to advance, and fight Montrose.

Accompanied by Sir John Hurry and the remnant of his army, Baillie obeyed.

As soon as Montrose had ascertained the strength of Baillie's army, he was irresolute in his intention, and halted to consider his position.

. The Covenanters had taken a very strong place,

an almost impregnable pass in a wood called Coelarachie. In numbers, Baillie's men were superior to the royal troops; and when his scouts returned to Montrose, the latter saw from their report how difficult it would be to dislodge the Covenanters from that position.

Early next morning, therefore, Montrose sent a trumpeter to Baillie's army to challenge him to a pitched battle.

He received a haughty, spirited answer: 'Go, tell your master,' said Baillie, 'I will not be ordered by him to fight. I will fight him when and where I choose.'

The following morning the Covenanters missed their foes. They had rapidly retreated. Although the Covenanters immediately pursued them, no trace of the Redshanks could be found. They were only tracked by their footprints on the heather, which showed that Montrose had once more retreated into Badenoch.

There, again, Montrose was at a great advantage over his enemies. The resources of that land were so familiar to him, that he always knew how to procure food for his men. Baillie's troops, on the other hand, had to subsist on the provisions they carried with them; and when they were eaten, were fain to retire to Inverness for more.

The long-desired encounter came at last, close to Alford on the river Don. Although the army of Montrose was again strengthened by Lord Huntly's return, accompanied by Aboyne and several of the Gordons, Baillie believed the moment to be advantageous for a battle. He learnt that Colkeitoch was absent with a large body of men, recruiting in the north; and although he knew that the chances of success were doubtful, he was compelled, owing to the rashness of Lord Lindsay, to fight.

That nobleman was an old friend of Montrose's, but an ardent Covenanter. He had raised a troop of soldiers, and in order to harass Montrose's allies, had ravaged Athol, especially the lands of the Gordons, and threatened the Marquis of Huntly's fair Castle Bog, then defended by a brave Cavalier named Gordon of Buckie. In order to extricate Lindsay from his position—for he was on the point of being attacked by Montrose's men—Baillie thought it expedient to risk the issue of a pitched battle.

Montrose was standing near the river-side when he was told that Baillie's army were within one mile of Alford. He immediately posted his men on a hill, which had the great advantage of having a marsh full of pits and ditches in its rear, while a steep piece of rising ground hid his own men. The

Covenanters then crossed the fords of Don, and proceeded to confront their enemy. The two armies were about equal in numbers, but they were very differently composed.

Baillie commanded an army of hired soldiers, mostly raw recruits, who, although officered by many a brave gentleman, did not fight as well as the Cavaliers, who were led to the field by their own chiefs, with a war-cry that spurred them on to deeds of valour. The Highlanders were ready, one and all, to die for their leaders. Among these were the brave Huntly, many a noble Gordon, Glengarry, young Napier, Macdonalds and Grahams. The Redshanks, although by this time a well-drilled, well-disciplined set of men, looked wild and terrific in their motley garbs.

The Redshanks carried every species of arms, and wore every kind of headpiece and bonnet. Targets and shields of every shape and fashion, and ancient guns and powder-horns, the spoil of many a bloody fray, were borne by these wild and fearless men, who, with claymores in their hands, their dirks by their sides, awaited the Covenanters.

Whatever stake Montrose had in the battle, to those ignorant but devoted men the issue was simply one of spoil and plunder. Victory to them meant rapine and bloodshed ; but devotion to their

chief was their religion, and as long as each clan was led by its rightful captain, Montrose feared neither desertion nor failure.

In the centre of the army, near the King's standard, stood the great Marquis. It was a bright, warm July day in 1645. Baillie's object in fording the river Don had been to station a body of men to prevent Montrose's retreat ; and Baillie's cavalry was commanded by the valiant Lindsay.

As the Covenanters sighted the Cavaliers, one of their leaders addressed them in spirited terms.

'Yonder are our foes,' cried he, raising his arm in the direction of the Royalists. 'It is their custom to make the first attack ; don't let them do so to-day. At them, and at once !'

But before his men could answer and obey, Montrose had advanced ; while almost at the same instant the Gordons charged Lord Lindsay's horse. If the Redshanks were valiant, so were their foes. They met the Gordons' fiery charge with firmness and courage ; and it was not till Lord Gordon and Colonel Nathaniel Gordon had literally fought inch by inch for the ground, that any way was made by the Cavaliers through Lindsay's gallant band. After great slaughter, at last the latter wavered. Montrose bid the reserve of men, commanded by young Napier, to advance. The musqueteers closed

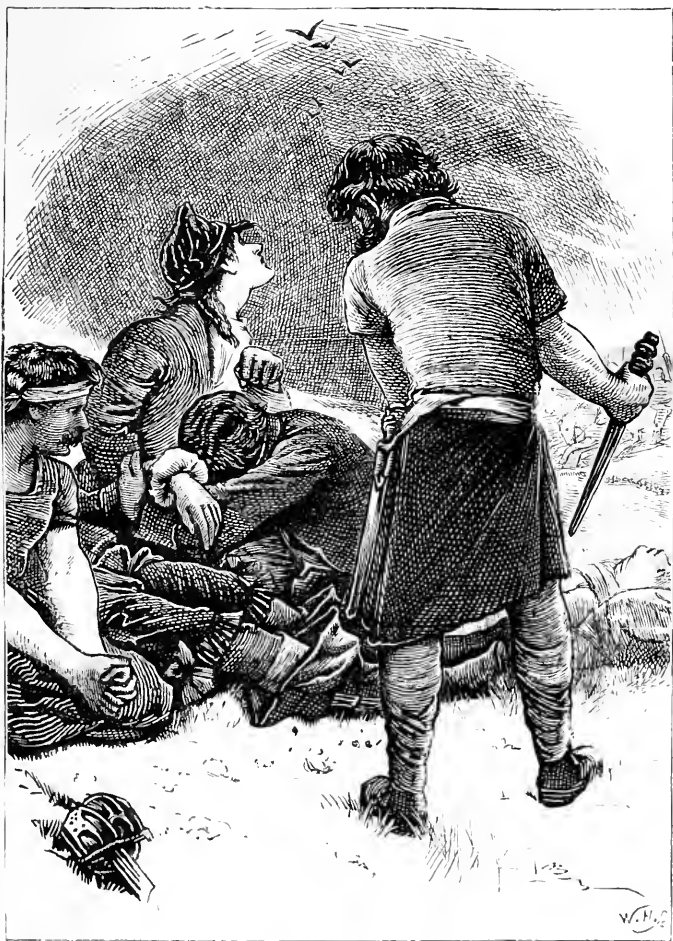
on the enemy's horse; and, amid Nathaniel Gordon's cries—'Soldiers, advance! throw down your guns, draw your swords and your dirks; kill these horse-men; hamstring their horses; to close quarters!'—the Covenanters fairly turned and fled!

Two troops of the Presbyterian army having thus given way, in spite of Baillie's personal exertions, the third wavered also. The Gordons fought with desperate bravery, maddened by the sight of a large head of cattle that Lindsay and his men had seized in their country, as well as aroused by Lord Gordon's promise to 'bring Baillie by the throat from the centre of his men!'

Great was the slaughter. Baillie's foot soldiers, overtaken by the infuriated Gordons, fell beneath their murderous claymores, and but few of the cavalry would have escaped, had not a sad loss taken place in the ranks of the Cavaliers.

Seizing Baillie by the sword-belt, Lord Gordon had just fulfilled his threat of capturing the great leader of the Covenanters' army, when, pierced by a bullet, the brave and beautiful Cavalier fell mortally wounded to the ground, amid his men. In one moment the shouts of triumph, the cheers of victory, and the Highland cries of battle were hushed, and changed into a long prolonged wail.

'What!' cried his followers, 'is he dead,—our



Death of Lord Gordon.—Page 136.

hero, our darling, our chief!—accursed be the hand that slew him! fatal the day that has lost us the fairest flower of all our clan!’

Throwing down their weapons, his followers kissed his fair face, calm, even in death, as it lay upturned to the blue skies, wan, white, and still!

Montrose, sorely as he needed all his energy at that trying moment, to persuade his followers to ensure victory by a vigorous pursuit, mingled his tears with Lord Gordon’s followers, who bitterly bewailed his loss.

This young nobleman possessed a fine heart and mind, and his loss to Montrose was very great indeed.

Lord Gordon it was, who, despite his father’s jealousy, and Lord Lewis’s double-dealing, had firmly attached a large number of the Gordons to the King’s side. As the great Marquis leant on his sword, gazing on the dead face of him who had been so true a friend, well might he feel that the victory had been dearly won. He had beaten his enemies, but lost his friend.

As to the Gordons, nothing could exceed their sorrow, as, accompanied by Lord Aboyne, Montrose laid the gallant chieftain’s body in a tomb in an old church at Aberdeen.

They swore, were they

‘Covenanting traitors,
Or the brood of false Argyle,’

to be avenged on those whose arms had killed their
‘beautiful and brave’ young lord.

Lord Aboyne was now heir to Lord Huntly, and although much discouraged by the loss of his brother, volunteered to go into his own country to beat up recruits for the royal cause. The Marquis, while waiting for him and Colkeitoch, who had not yet returned, planned another daring scheme.

The Scottish Parliament, in spite of the news of the battle of Naseby, beginning to feel their fifth defeat, were much depressed at the sight of the large number of gentlemen who now openly declared for Montrose.

Fever was raging in Edinburgh, so that the Government met at Stirling, where they passed a vote of thanks to General Baillie for his efforts in the north, and despite his defeat at Alford, reinstalled him in his command.

The Scottish Parliament were beginning also to see that Montrose could not be crushed without the most determined effort.

They resolved, therefore, to raise an army of 10,000 men, and ordered the authorities throughout the Lowlands to forward all the fighting men that

could be found to Perth, by the end of the month.

When he heard that the Parliament was assembled at Stirling, Montrose contemplated the daring project of scattering it by a rapid march on that place ; but when he was told that they were raising so large an army against him, he prudently abandoned the idea, and did all he could to recruit his own forces.

The Marquis had established his camp in Angus, and ere long was joined not only by his cousin Inchbrakie, with fresh troops of attached Athol men, but by Colkeitch bringing upwards of 1000 soldiers.

Montrose, standing near the entrance to the royal camp, watched 700 gallant Macleans, led by their chiefs, Macgregors and Macnabs, defile past, followed by 500 of the Clanranald men, each well provided with provisions foraged from the enemy's countries on the road.

The leader noted, however, one youth barely twenty years of age, who carried nothing. Reproached by Colkeitch for his remissness, Donald, for so was he called, immediately started off in search of plunder, and in a short time returned with quite enough to maintain the whole of the Clanranald men to whom he belonged ; and thereafter

none, it was said, brought more 'creachs' to the camp than this young Highlander.

All this time Lord Huntly dallied with the royal cause. He held out hopes to Montrose of his joining the royal standard, and the influence of his name being alone needed, now that Montrose found himself at the head of an army of from 4000 to 5000 men, the Covenanters totally defeated, and the Parliament baffled. Still Lord Huntly lingered. Montrose had sent Lord Aboyne at the head of 2000 clansmen, to guide Lord Huntly to his camp; but still he came not.

Chafing at the delay, Montrose crossed the River Tay, and took up fresh quarters in the forest.

He was only five miles from Perth; and when news of his dangerous vicinity reached the Covenanters of that city,—at which place the Scottish Parliament was now assembled, the plague having reached Stirling,—great was the alarm. They imagined that Montrose intended an immediate assault upon the town.

The authorities were all in favour of flight, and entreated the heads of the Parliament to adopt that course. Fortunately they did not follow the advice; for Montrose, without cavalry, had no intentions of trying to take the place. Although, by a clever stratagem, he contrived to make them believe he

had a large number of horsemen at command, he kept aloof for several days in daily hope of Lord Aboyne's return with reinforcements. It was not for a day or two that the Covenanting troops found out how the Marquis had tricked them. Then they unlocked the city gates and sallied out in pursuit of their foe, who, however, by that time had retreated towards the hilly country by the fords of Almond. A band of volunteers, about 300 Presbyterians, continued to pursue the Cavaliers long after their leaders had seen how hopeless was the effort to overtake them. They even contrived to considerably annoy Montrose's rearguard.

Led by a brave man named Cornell, the Covenanters had seized several baggage horses belonging to the Cavaliers, when a shot from one of the Redshanks ended his career, and allowed Montrose to retreat in good order towards Dunkeld.

The Covenanters did not retreat, however, before Montrose gave them a signal lesson. He chose twenty of the best shots in his army, and bid them 'check the insolence of their pursuers.'

The men chosen, accustomed to bring down the deer of their mountains, found no difficulty, under cover of some brushwood, in shooting down many of the finest of the Covenanters' soldiers. One by one they dropped to the ground pierced to the heart

by such unerring marksmen ; while, hurried and affrighted, the others not only abandoned their pursuit, but fled precipitately into Perth.

As ill luck for the Cavaliers would have it, on their way back they passed through Methven Forest. There they lighted upon the wives and women of the Irish and Highlanders of Montrose's army, who had been left behind, and in the most brutal manner put every one of them to death in cold blood.

At last, outside Dunkeld, where Montrose had pitched his camp, almost in sight of his enemy's army, he received some reinforcements from the north ; but he was much disappointed when he found that their number only amounted to three hundred and twenty. However, as several loyal Highland gentlemen of good position had joined him at the same time,—among them Alexander Ogilvie of Inverquharity, a youth as illustrious by his bravery and talents as by his ancient descent,—Montrose determined to again put his 'fortunes to the touch,' and attack the Covenanters. His scouts, charged to ascertain their exact position, brought him back word that his foes had crossed the River Earn, and were in full retreat. The Marquis, preceded by Colonel Nathaniel Gordon and Sir William Pollock, who led a small force to clear the way, set off to Kinross, determined to induce the enemy to meet him in open battle.

On the road, the small band of Cavaliers who preceded Montrose fell in unexpectedly with two hundred of the enemy. The Royalists had reduced their number to twelve men, having sent all the rest of their band off to scour the land before them for news of the enemy. The inequality of their numbers was very great, for they were only twelve against nearly two hundred. One moment's reflection showed the Cavaliers that retreat was impossible; and therefore planting themselves against a hill, they met the enemy's attack with so much valour, that they put the Covenanters to flight, and even took several prisoners.

After such a brilliant exploit, you may be sure the dauntless band when they reached the main army were praised by shout and cheer.

Montrose knew that most of the Fife men were firmly attached to the Presbyterian religion, and consequently devoted to the Covenanters' cause. He therefore dreaded the possibility of General Baillie's army being reinforced before he could induce him to meet him on the battle-field.

Closely followed by Baillie's army, yet ravaging the land as he tramped along after leaving Fife, in which country he despaired of a battle, the Marquis passed Stirling and encamped at Kilsyth.

His principal object in crossing the Forth had

been to draw nearer to the English border, where he still cherished the hope of joining the King.

Such a junction seemed the unfortunate monarch's last remaining chance. Naseby had been fought and lost, and the Marquis's whole heart was set on the scheme of seeing Charles head the royal cause in Scotland in person, and save at least his Scottish crown.

The Covenanters, after marching close upon his rear, crossed the Carron, and taking a short cut encamped close to Kilsyth.

Argyle himself partly commanded the large Covenanting army, seven thousand strong, that now awaited the encounter, but Baillie was its nominal and discontented leader. He had rebelled against the dictation to which Argyle's presence, and that of the committee appointed by the Estates, subjected him. He had resigned his command in disgust, but had consented, from patriotic motives, to retain it another fortnight. The very day that the rival forces were brought face to face, Baillie's fortnight expired.

He was an honest and good soldier, and had openly expressed his disapproval of Argyle's interference. He was therefore in no temper to hide it when the latter asked his advice as to the next step to be taken. When he saw the superiority of Montrose's position, sheltered behind some cottages

and gardens, Baillie again declared that his mind misgave him as to the advisability of fighting.

‘If the rebels engage us there,’ he said, ‘they will have the advantage ; and to lose the day is to lose the kingdom !’

He was overborne by the arguments of others, and forced to carry out Argyle’s orders. Reluctantly he ordered his men to advance towards the hill on which the great Marquis had drawn up his Cavaliers in battle array.

Up to the last moment, Montrose had been undecided about fighting ; but when he saw that, although the Covenanters had a great advantage in numbers, his position was unquestionably the better, he hesitated no longer.

‘We have,’ he exclaimed, ‘the best ground, and that is more than half the battle.’

Standing on a little raised mound surveying the Highlanders,—a gallant band indeed, and ready for any deed of daring,—the royal banner flying, his blood bounding through every vein, as he thought that were he to win another battle he should see his King righted at last, the face of Montrose paled, for he heard a murmur among his tartaned bands.

‘What is it ? what ! is it possible ? can they fear those mounted Covenanters whose glittering breast-plates flash in the sun before them ?’—for the first of

Baillie's regiments planted opposite the Redshanks was one of dragoons. 'By heavens! they do,' he cried, as loud murmurs strike upon his ear that they fear to attack 'iron-clad soldiers,' on whom 'no claymore could avail.'

To hesitate were to lose ground; and in a moment Montrose had hit upon an expedient to allay this new difficulty. 'Clansmen,' cried he,—his sweet voice rising loud and clear,—'you have beaten yonder cowards at Tippermuir, Auldearn, and Alford; their officers dare not lead them against you except in coats of mail. A Highlander who meets his foe on Scottish ground needs no such iron coverings. Let us show our contempt of them by fighting them in our shirts!'

Setting them the example, he bid them strip to the waist; and in a few minutes the Cavaliers, divested of all cumbersome clothing, were prepared to make the assault.

Montrose's 'pluck' struck the right chord. Not content with taking off their upper garments and turning up their shirt sleeves, the foot soldiers actually stripped themselves to the shirt, and presented to the astonished Covenanters the novel spectacle of a nearly naked army!

The first movement made by the Covenanters was towards some gardens in which Montrose had

planted some of his advanced guard. They were repulsed by the gunners, who, stationed behind walls and fences, fired hotly on their assailants. A loud shout from the Redshanks greeted this first turn of victory in their favour.

A gallant but imprudent youth named Donald, son of the chief of the Clanranald clan, was carried away by the enthusiasm of the moment. Waving his claymore, he leapt past the Macleans,—who being more obedient soldiers, had hesitated before attacking the enemy without their general's orders,—and, followed by all his men, met the enemy face to face, and hand to hand.

This adventurous band was followed by the Macgregors, headed by their chief Patrick, a warrior so brave that he was also called 'Caoch,' a Gaelic word signifying great valour, while Colkeitoch and his band followed more slowly.

Montrose knit his brows angrily when he saw his Redshanks thus fighting before they had received his orders; but as he marked their courage and bravery, he forgave them their disobedience in sympathizing with their enthusiasm.

The battle of Kilsyth would have turned out a defeat instead of a victory for the Royalists, had not Montrose's ready wit again saved his cause. Looking eagerly after his rash Highlanders, he saw that

they must be cut to pieces were not they instantly supported. The Covenanters were brave soldiers too ; moreover, they were double the number of their assailants. The Cavaliers, compelled to fight up a hill, were on the point of being overmatched and slain, when Colkeitoch rushed to their aid. Even his valuable assistance was but small in comparison with their necessity. The slowness with which Baillie's rear came forward to the aid of the van of his forces, the only part of his army engaged at that time, aided the Marquis in collecting his ideas. He saw that the remainder of his regiments hesitated to obey his eager commands that his Red-shanks should be reserved.

Montrose went hastily up to the aged Earl of Airlie, who was standing at the head of the Ogilvies.

'My lord,' said he, 'you see the scrape into which yonder mad youths have fallen by their precipitate valour. All men's eyes are fixed on your lordship, for your rank entitles you to precede all others in showing foolhardy youth that discretion and valour united to age can redeem the day.'

The venerable Earl, a model of loyal fidelity, immediately undertook the commission. Followed by all the Ogilvies, and guarded by a troop of horse, he led his men to the charge.

Their vigorous attack completely routed the

enemy's infantry, which fell back in great confusion. The rest of the Cavaliers no sooner saw the rebels waver, than they rushed forward and completed the victory. The Covenanters were pursued for miles by the victorious Cavaliers. The banks and braes of the roads along which the Covenanters fled were stained with blood. The Redshanks gave no quarter, and between 5000 and 6000 of the enemy were slain. As they fled towards Stirling or the sea, they fell by hundreds beneath their adversaries' claymores. Montrose's loss was but small in comparison; though so bloody was the day, that for a hundred and fifty years after the battle of Kilsyth, it was recorded among the peasantry as the most fatal of all in that memorable war. The Cavaliers spared few lives that dreadful day; but at Montrose's express orders several prisoners of distinction were saved from death, and those he treated well, and after a time released. For the third time, Argyle owed his life to a boat. Flying to a little port called Queensferry, he reached a vessel anchored in the Firth of Forth, and hurriedly put out to sea. Never was a victory more complete than that of Kilsyth, and perhaps during the whole of the Scottish civil wars, none more bloody. The shouts of his vindictive soldiery, as they butchered the flying foe, were borne back to Montrose.



CHAPTER V.

'Let no man to more love pretend
Than he has hearts in store ;
True love begun shall never end,
Love one and love no more.'

—MARQUIS OF MONTROSE.

BEFORE pursuing the romantic history of Montrose, or contrasting his victorious position after the battle of Kilsyth with former apparently hopeless fortunes, when, disguised as a groom, he had crossed the border with only three companions to invade a kingdom, we must turn and see what the unfortunate Charles, for whom he was fighting, was doing in England.

Cromwell, invincible by his clear intellect and masterly policy, as much as by his personal courage, was subduing one after the other, every town, castle, or fortified house that still held out for the King. The hopes of the Royalists fell with the battle of

Naseby ; and the course of events all tended towards the fall of the monarchy in England. Charles had fled into Wales, before taking refuge afterwards at Oxford, and was slowly forming the fatal resolution of throwing himself on the mercy of the Scots. The unfortunate King still fondly believed that their ancient affection to his family and crown would revive at the evidence that he believed their loyalty would prove stronger than their fanaticism.

The Covenanters, however, saw only in Charles the First a chief obstacle to the darling idea of all its Calvinistic adherents, and that was, that were the monarchy overthrown, the Presbyterian faith would become universal in England as well as in Scotland. The Covenanters laid siege to Newark, which still held out for Charles, a large army having been sent from Scotland to the aid of the Parliament.

While Charles was therefore slowly but surely rushing to the saddest doom that ever befell an English king, Montrose, after Kilsyth, found himself on the road to the attainment of the object for which he had taken up arms, and unfurled the royal standard in Scotland. That object was to clear the whole of the north by his arms, and so prepare the way for its recovery by his sovereign.

The Covenanters in Scotland were, for the

moment, completely vanquished. Two of their foremost men had fled to Ireland; Argyle and others had taken refuge in Berwick, a strongly fortified place; and although Montrose had laid waste the land, the whole of Scotland rang with his praises. His cruelty in many cases—for even his best friends acknowledged he had sometimes been cruel—was forgotten in his success; while his resolution and firmness, his patience and virtues, were extolled, till, from being held up to public abhorrence, he was magnified and flattered into a hero. After the battle of Kilsyth he was openly acknowledged as Charles's representative in Scotland, and many influential noblemen, who up to that time had not only held back from the royal cause, but even openly sided with the Covenanters, now flocked round Montrose to pay him court, and to offer him their support.

The plague was raging in Edinburgh, and the news of the loss of the battle of Kilsyth struck consternation into the hearts of all its citizens. Well had they reason to dread Montrose, for the capital had been the principal focus of rebellion, while imprisoned in its Tolbooth were several of the hero's dearest friends.

After marching to Glasgow, the first thought of Montrose was to release those prisoners. Had it

not been for the risk of exposing his men to the disease then raging in the city, he would have marched to Edinburgh directly after the battle of Kilsyth.

Montrose only remained a few days at Glasgow ; but during his visit there, the citizens vied with each other in abject politeness. They presented him with a large sum in gold ; and the hero, anxious to propitiate his newly-found adherents, and fearful lest his Highland followers should be tempted to plunder the wealthy citizens, soon marched out again.

He encamped at a place called Bothwell Moor, about twelve miles from Glasgow. Charles, after visiting Raglan Castle and Hereford, had now reached Oxford, whence he sent off two trusty messengers to Montrose. One was a President Spottiswoode, the other an Englishman named Sandilands. These trusty messengers had been compelled to take a most circuitous route to avoid falling into the enemy's hands ; and the bearer of his royal master's commission to the Marquis of Montrose, to act as 'Lieutenant - Governor, and General of all His Majesty's forces' in Scotland, Sir Robert Spottiswoode, who was devotedly attached to the King, had reached Glasgow from Wales by the Isle of Man, the Highlands of Scotland, and through Athol.

The royal commission was formally presented to the Marquis at a review of his whole troops, under the royal standard. Montrose was also empowered in the King's name to convene a Parliament at Glasgow.

In the meantime, Montrose had sent two of his most attached adherents, the Master of Napier and Colonel Nathaniel Gordon, to summon Edinburgh to release the Royalist prisoners, and submit to the King.

The Lieutenant's deputies were supported by the persuasive presence of a party of warriors, who, should the capital resist, were ordered to employ the arguments of 'fire and the sword' to bring it to reason.

No such harsh measures, however, were needed. The prisoners, among whom were the Earl of Crawford, the gallant Lord Ogilvie, and several others eminent for loyalty, were instantly released the moment the Edinburgh authorities heard of young Napier's errand.

The Cavaliers did not enter Edinburgh for fear of the plague, but sent a message to the town, commanding it to surrender.

Such was the dread inspired by the very name of Montrose at that time, that no servility seemed too great to those poor bewildered burghers to show

their prisoners. Those whom they had but so lately treated most severely were implored to intercede for them to the King's lieutenant.

Their two principal prisoners, Lords Crawford and Ogilvie, advised them to submit unconditionally to Montrose, and to send two delegates to the hero's camp to plead their cause.

The citizens took their advice, and, accompanied by Lords Crawford and Ogilvie, set off to the Cavaliers' quarters.

The Master of Napier on his road to Edinburgh had released several of his own relations, among them his father, wife, and sisters, on whom the Scottish Government had wreaked their vengeance against the royal cause.

Those unfortunate prisoners, highly delighted when the Master of Napier released them at Linlithgow, all went back to Montrose.

No one could be more gracious in the hour of triumph than Montrose. Instead of reproaching the Edinburgh delegates, he told them that, provided they were loyal for the future, and gave up Edinburgh Castle and all its arms and ammunition to the King, as well as releasing all their prisoners, he would intercede for them with their naturally indignant sovereign. The deputies were perfectly ready to promise all should be performed as Mon-

trose wished. They acted according to that promise just as long as the royal influence was in the ascendant, and no longer ; for at heart they were rank Covenanters, far from sincere in their professions of loyalty to Montrose and his cause.

In the meantime, Montrose had sent Colkeitoch and Drummond of Balloch to quell a rising among the western Covenanters, under the Lords Cassilis, Eglinton, and Glencairn.

When, however, the Cavaliers reached the west of Scotland, they found that, far from offering resistance, the counties of Ayr and Renfrew were all anxious to seal past offences, and take the oath of allegiance.

Many who had been red-hot rebels were among the most forward in their offers to Montrose ; and none greeted Colkeitoch, lately knighted by Montrose, more warmly than the Countess of Loudon, whose husband was one of the first supporters of the Covenant.

She feasted him with the best her castle could afford, and sent her own servant back with a formal message of respect to the Marquis. Indeed, this lady's conduct illustrates the effect produced all over Scotland by the battle of Kilsyth. The Marquis had thus every reason to expect success in his cherished idea of joining the King on the border. There he knew he could count on the assistance of several

devoted English Cavaliers, such as Sir Marmaduke Langdale, Sir Richard Hutton, high-sheriff of Yorkshire, and his relative Colonel Anthony Byerley, in Durham. The last-named gentleman had indeed already mortgaged his estates to raise a regiment long called the 'Byerley bull-dogs' for the service of the King.

Two things now occurred to make the success of such a plan doubtful. Argyle and the leaders of the Presbyterian party, although no longer the idols of their nation, were bent on one more struggle to destroy Montrose. Shut up in Berwick, they had hailed with delight the arrival of General Leslie at the head of his famous cavalry, numbering six thousand strong.

This general had been summoned by the Covenanters to redeem, if possible, the Presbyterian cause. He was no mean adversary, for at the battle of Marston Moor it was his troop that partly won the day.

Montrose by this time had already sent the Marquis of Douglas and Lord Ogilvie into Dumfriesshire to raise fresh levies for the King. Perhaps, had it not been for the advice of several insincere friends, who, although they were Royalists by profession, were Covenanters at heart, our hero might still have saved Charles by hurrying to the border

before Leslie had had time to reach Berwick. But he waited, and the opportunity vanished with the delay.

In the meantime, Colkeitoch and his Highlanders deserted the royal standard.

It was the clansmen's custom to return home after victory, for the twofold purpose of securing their spoil, and chanting their success among their own people; but Montrose knew that to lose such a large portion of his troops at that critical moment, would go far to rob his recent success of its fruits.

Although in the hour of battle none were so faithful to him, Montrose's fame suffered much from his wild and lawless Redshanks. As they were unpaid soldiers, the Marquis was often compelled to permit several derelictions of martial law in his Highland followers.

He now used every argument to persuade them to remain; but though Macdonald, who volunteered to lead them home, promised their speedy return, Montrose, with his usual acuteness, saw that beneath this desertion there was a deeper purpose, and that the reason alleged by the Athol men, that they must return to repair their dwellings, burnt and injured by the Covenanters, was a mere subterfuge. Nor was he wrong. Allaster Macdonald, now knighted, was longing to go into Argyle's country.

He burned to revenge the ancient injuries the Campbells had inflicted on his race ; and, finding that he could now command a large band, thought the moment for revenge of private wrongs might well be seized.

Montrose watched his departure, followed by six hundred and twenty men, five hundred of whom were his own clansmen ; and as they left his camp, his eye rested upon his once faithful officer for the last time. They never met again, those two brave men ; and with Colkeitch's departure, the royal cause began to fail in Scotland.

This desertion was soon followed by another. Lord Aboyne, under pretence of convoying his father, Lord Huntly, safely to Montrose, insisted on retiring to the Highlands with all the Gordons.

Had Huntly, whose very name was powerful beyond the Grampians, been above the petty jealousy which from first to last hindered him from joining the Marquis, the result of the civil wars of Scotland had been different ; and Charles the First safe among his faithful Highlanders, the crime of regicide might even then have been spared to England.

It must have been but with very dim hopes of success that Montrose at last started for the border. In vain had he, with all his persuasive eloquence,

tried to retain Lord Aboyne if 'only for one week longer.' That nobleman, for some hidden reasons of his own, however, was bent on going home ; and after seeing Macdonald and the Athol men march off, the Marquis had to confront the fact when the Gordons too had departed. Independent of the Ogilvies, a small but faithful band, and the Irish brigade, about five to seven hundred in number, his army was no longer a well-disciplined one, but a mere mob of untried recruits.

Nevertheless, he set off and joined Douglas and Ogilvie, marching past Edinburgh and through the Lothians, till he reached Dumfriesshire. Douglas and Ogilvie had been very unsuccessful in their expedition in the southern part of Scotland, for the greater number of its inhabitants were devoted to the Covenant, and violently opposed to the monarchy.

Doubtless, as Montrose marched along, he hoped to hear that either Charles himself, or Digby, Earl of Bristol, who had always strenuously promoted the Marquis's cause at Court, was ready to effect a junction with him ; for numerous letters had passed between Charles and his Scottish lieutenant, in all of which the latter was urged to rely on the loyalty of the border lords, and to expect 'a party of horse' from England.

Charles, irresolute and wavering, had lost by his want of firmness his last chance. While intending to meet Montrose, he had lingered recruiting at Doncaster, and even missed an excellent opportunity of intercepting Leslie while on his northward road.

Now Leslie was close to Montrose with a splendid troop of cavalry ; and the Marquis, deserted by his Highlanders, was advancing, in the vain hope of meeting the King.

Perhaps, after so many brilliant victories, our hero may have been too confident of success, and neglected the usual precautions of war ; at any rate, Leslie was close upon him, while Montrose, busy in despatching letters to the King, was falsely assured by his scouts no enemy was to be seen.

On the Cavaliers' road south they had met the Earl of Traquair, a nobleman secretly attached to Argyle's party, although at that time professing devotion to the royal cause.

Unaware of his real sentiments, and misled by his professions, Montrose confided to Traquair all his plans ; and while the latter promised to keep him informed of Leslie's movements, he had treacherously determined to betray them.

Traquair also, to mask his real sentiments, sent Montrose a troop of horse, under his eldest son, Lord Linton.

Montrose was much disappointed that the Lords Home and Roxburghe neither sent messages to him as he passed through their country, nor invited him to their houses.

The Marquis, in no mood to overlook a slight, was on the point of paying them a visit, with every intention of enforcing their adherence to the royal cause by the sword, when he heard that they had been carried off as prisoners by Leslie.

This was nothing but a ruse on the part of those noblemen ; for they had prevailed on Leslie to take them prisoners, purposely to avoid the wrath of Montrose, and at the same time to keep in both with the Covenanters and Cavaliers.

Finding that no reinforcements reached him from Charles, and that the border lords were so tardy and indeed averse to joining him, Montrose determined to abandon his scheme and retreat to the Highlands.

He therefore marched to Jedburgh, and thence to Selkirk, and at length encamped on the plain of Philiphaugh, where, being sheltered by a wood, he fondly hoped that the camp was protected from a surprise.

Misled by Traquair's perfidy, — for, instead of sending Montrose word of Leslie's whereabouts, that nobleman has been accused of sending word to the Covenanters of the Marquis's weakness in point of

numbers, and his intention of retreating to the Highlands,—our hero, instead of remaining with the main body of his army, took up his own quarters in a village on the opposite side of the river, in company with Lords Napier, Airrie, and Crawford.

Unfortunately for the Cavaliers, a dense mist favoured General Leslie's advance, and prevented the Royalists from seeing his approach.

The Covenanters, guided by a peasant, reached the fatal plain of Philiphaugh, along the southern side of the Tweed, across the River Ettrick, and were almost between Montrose's headquarters and his camp before the latter even knew they were in that part of the country.

Unmindful of danger, and his heart still bent on joining the King, Montrose had sat up the whole of the previous night engaged in writing despatches to urge Charles to send him instant help. Personal supervision of his soldiers being impossible that night, the Marquis had confided the duty of posting the sentinels to his captains, while the first sound of firing next day that struck upon his ear, as Leslie's trumpets sounded, and his brigades attacked the Royalists, came too late to save him. All the honour he had won at Kilsyth, and the position he had gained, was fated to vanish away in the mists of Philiphaugh.

He flung himself upon his horse and rushed to the camp, where he found his soldiers alarmed and surprised, and in the greatest disorder. Orders having been given the night before to prepare for a day's march, the Cavaliers, at the moment of the attack, were preparing for the road.

Half an hour before daybreak, the steel-clad Presbyterian cavalry had attacked the Royalists' right wing. It was a damp September morning, the thirteenth of the month (1645). In spite of those well-disciplined troops having more than half the advantage on their side over Montrose's raw levies, they were at first repulsed. Again, once more the Royalists threw those iron brigades into disorder; but when they found that as soon as one regiment retired another came up, they threw down their arms and begged for quarter, or fled for their lives.

Hapless Montrose! In vain, at the head of thirty Cavaliers, principally Scottish gentlemen of noble and gentle blood, he fought with desperate valour—the day was lost beyond redemption. He would have fought on till he fell, had not his friends dragged him from that fatal plain.

'Live! live!' cried Douglas, 'to redeem the day.'

It is said that at the very moment Queen Henrietta Maria, a fugitive in Paris, was offering up a thanksgiving for the victory of Kilsyth, its victor

was retreating, and his whole army, except a very small remnant, slain or prisoners. His way was up the Yarrow, and across Minch Moor towards Peebles, where he rested a few hours.

Overtaking a regiment of his own men, and rejoined, to his great joy, by Lords Crawford and Airlie, who had escaped by another road, Montrose, broken-hearted yet not despairing, crossed the Clyde, and, at the head of about two hundred men, retired to the Highlands.

The Covenanters had not only treacherously slaughtered almost the whole of Montrose's Irish brigade, after they had surrendered on the promise of quarter, but amid open rejoicings, in which the canting Calvinistic clergyman quoted Scripture, they executed a numerous company of prisoners, numbering among them some of Scotland's most honoured names. The royal standards were, however, not destined to fall into their hands, for both were gallantly saved and given back to the 'great Marquis' by the brave men who carried them. Two of the captains of the Irish brigade, named O'Ryan and Lachlin, were reserved for a public execution at Edinburgh, where (when Leslie, returning to Lothian after Philiphaugh, had liberated the leaders of the Covenant shut up in Berwick) their sentence was publicly carried out on the Castle Hill.

A meaner soul than that animating our hero's body would, crushed by such a blow, have succumbed under fortune and abandoned the King's cause. Not so Montrose. He redeemed the day with noble fortitude. A mind that can support with calmness the blows of fate, ever rises superior to misfortune.

As he and his sorrowing little band slowly wended their way, Montrose argued thus: 'Are not the Highlanders,' said he, 'the very bones and sinews of the land? Shall I despair when I can regain all I have lost? 'Twas but a part of my army who were there. I will *never despair of a good cause!* By heavens! no!'

With such thoughts he schemed as he went along, and determined to make another effort for the King. The Marquis of Douglas and Lord Airlie he sent far into Angus to recruit there, and Lord Erskine into Mar for the same purpose.

Sir John Dalziel, who among all his friends at Philiphaugh had been the most urgent that he should save himself by flight, and who was brother to the nobleman who at Naseby led Charles the First from the field, he sent to Lord Carnegie, urging him to delay no longer, but to join him with all the Carnegies he could muster at his back.

Montrose's influence was still powerful with the

Redshanks ; but harvest, although it was late in the year, was still ungarnered, and their houses, they urged, still needed repair ; yet, at the sound of their leader's voice, they could not refuse to follow him. Four hundred enlisted under his banner, and the whole of the Athol country promised him its full support should the royal cause again revive sufficiently to enable the Marquis to march southwards.

Montrose established himself at Braemar, where he did all he could to induce Macdonald and Aboyne, whose desertion had been the primary cause of his disasters, to rejoin him.

All Montrose's entreaties could not induce the Marquis of Huntly to throw his vast influence into the scale. The Earl of Aboyne indeed promised aid, and later on joined Montrose, but his father kept aloof, unable to forget or to forgive his ancient grudge against the Marquis.

With his mind harassed and perplexed by the various checks he received, Montrose was plunged into deeper grief by hearing how the Covenanters had massacred a number of helpless women and children of his camp after Philiphaugh, and of the sad fate of the noblemen and gentlemen who had been captured in their flight.

In the middle of the great distress that Montrose felt at feeling that, do what he could, no effort of

his could save these faithful adherents, he received a message from Charles, urging him to rejoin Digby, for that that nobleman had raised a body of horse, and was nearing the border.

With conflicting feelings Montrose, at the head of about twelve hundred foot and three hundred horse, hurried southwards to save, if possible, by a victory over Leslie, the lives of those who still survived the vengeance of his Covenanters. O'Ryan and Lachlin he knew were already executed ; and Sir William Rollock, having incurred Argyle's displeasure, had also met his doom.

Aboyne, although accompanied by a very small party of Gordons, none of whom were steady adherents, and most of whom deserted from time to time under various excuses, descended into the Lowlands with Montrose ; and towards the end of October our hero was close to Glasgow, where the Covenanters at that very moment were engaged in trying Montrose's friends.

I say 'trying,' although the word was a mockery, where fanaticism had already decided that death, and death alone, should be the doom of those hapless men. In vain they defended themselves, as in the case of President Spottiswoode, by bringing Scripture forward in their defence, saying, 'Wouldest thou smite those whom thou hast taken captive with

thy sword and thy bow in the field?' (2 Kings vi.) The Covenanting clergy would only listen to texts that seemed to sanction the shedding of an enemy's blood, and one after the other the loyalists met their fate.

Sir Robert Spottiswoode maintained his innocence to the last, and after—in an affecting letter of farewell—commending his children to Montrose's care, died, as a Christian soldier should, with firmness and heroism, in the early part of January 1646; Montrose having again retreated into the Highlands.

In spite of the ascendancy obtained by the Presbyterian clergy over the minds of their fanatic followers, when Sir Robert mounted the scaffold to meet his doom, the crowd below it assembled to witness the murder could not disguise their discontent; for the victim was well known to be a most honourable man, and a very learned judge.

Yet not even could his enemies leave him alone in his last hour. A Presbyterian minister attended him from the prison to the block. When that person saw the effect that Sir Robert's calm and dignified bearing had produced on the crowd, he turned to the Provost and begged him to order the soldiers to drown his last words with the noise of their drums.

Perfectly unruffled, Sir Robert Spottiswoode, when he saw that the Covenanting officials were determined to prohibit him from speaking, calmly drew a paper out of his pocket and threw it to the crowd. It was eagerly picked up and perused, and contained his last speech and address.

In vain his Presbyterian attendant would have thrust his unwelcome exhortations on the dying man. Sir Robert turned calmly away, and with a pious ejaculation, in which he prayed that his soul might soon be with his 'merciful Saviour,' hastened to meet his dread doom by giving the signal to the executioner to finish his work speedily.

Such a great example was nobly followed, and most of the Cavaliers afterwards executed met death as calmly and firmly.

Added to the poignant grief with which Montrose's noble heart was torn when he heard of the fate of his friends, our hero felt overwhelmed with the repeated failure of all his attempts to gain over Huntly to his side.

The chief of the Gordons held back from joining Montrose with an obstinate inflexibility that seemed to defy the most persuasive arguments.

Montrose determined to make another last effort to conciliate Huntly. He first sent two of his friends to see what effect the display of the King's

commission to Montrose would have upon the obdurate chief.

The latter, with scornful impatience, flung back all that they urged, when Montrose's messengers showed him Charles's mandate. 'I understand,' cried Huntly, 'the King's business and commands better than do either you or Montrose! As to Montrose, neither I nor my children will have anything to do with him.'

The messengers brought back word how ill they had succeeded in their mission. The failure of their endeavours did not, however, deter Montrose. As Huntly would not listen to his agents, he determined to see him himself.

Before Montrose set off to Gordon Castle, he tried, by sending Sir John Dalziel to Huntly, to avoid thrusting himself into the latter's presence, for our hero well knew that Huntly had neither forgiven nor forgotten his resentment against him.

Sir John Dalziel, after urging weighty reasons to persuade Huntly to coalesce with Montrose, entreated him to see our hero; but he could not induce him to consent to a conference, and sent him back to Montrose, who was at that time in Athol.

Montrose was a man of sudden impulses. Determined to lose no chance of rescuing Charles, he

put aside all feelings of pride and resentment, and hastening through deep snows, across the wild regions of the Highlands of Angus,—for it was in the month of December,—he suddenly appeared in Strathbogie.

Yet even when Huntly heard that Montrose was close to his abode, he was resolute in his determination of avoiding an interview. He fled to a castle on the Spey, and believed himself safe from the presence of Montrose.

The fact was, that Huntly not only resented the ancient grievance he had against Montrose, but he for other reasons dreaded any explanations with him. There is no one we fear so much to meet as those whom we have ill-treated. The large pieces of artillery that the year before Montrose had buried, to be safe from his enemies, Huntly's sons had surreptitiously dug up and carried off to their own castles, besides appropriating much ammunition taken by Montrose from his enemies.

Such acts, together with many other circumstances, such as levying taxes unknown to Montrose, under pretence of continuing the war, had all shown the Marquis that Huntly had made up his mind to defy his authority.

However, Montrose, bent only on effecting his own end, put aside all his own private feelings,

and set off one night with very few attendants, and surprised Huntly by appearing suddenly before him.

We do not hear from history how these noble Cavaliers met, but the result showed that, in the presence of Montrose's pleading face and eloquence, the great chief's ill-humour vanished. At any rate, all was sunshine between them for the moment. Huntly gave Montrose his hand, and they sat down to plan further operations against the King's opponents. They concerted a system of military action together, and laid plans for besieging Inverness. Montrose, they agreed, was to approach Inverness by Strathspey, Huntly by the sea-coast.

This apparently friendly understanding between the two rival chiefs highly delighted the Gordons, most of whom were warmly devoted to the royal cause, and had only held back from fear of offending Huntly. We shall see what that nobleman's promises were worth, and how he kept his word with Montrose.

The Marquis, however, was too loyal a spirit to suspect that their agreement would not be carried out. He set off in high spirits to besiege Inverness, sending Graham of Inchbrakie, and John Drummond of Balloch, to take possession of the Athol district, with strict orders that, if any revolt took place, it should be promptly suppressed.

The Highlanders in those parts were all thoroughly devoted to the King, and were therefore quite ready to show their readiness to obey his lieutenants.

Macdonald, whom none of our hero's efforts had succeeded in drawing back to the royal cause, was waging a war of fire and sword against the Campbells in their own country. Driven by fear of Colkeitoch from the west, many of the latter clan fled into Athol. They were wild, desperate men, who, driven from their own homes, had recourse to violence for the means of subsistence. They joined the Stewarts, Menzieses, and others who were of Argyle's party, and formed a formidable band of fifteen hundred men.

Their first hostile act was directed against the Macgregors and Macnabs, who had sided with Montrose; and they then set off to invade Athol. At the head of only seven hundred men, Graham of Inchbrakie met them close to Callander, and after defeating them in battle, forced their antagonists to retreat to Stirling, although a great many were slain in their flight.

Montrose was not so victorious. He was doomed to bitter disappointment. Infuriated at hearing of the death not only of Sir Robert Spottiswoode, but how, with unrelenting vengeance Argyle and his friends were murdering his friends one after another,

few escaping—except Lord Ogilvie, who got off by exchanging clothes with his sister—Montrose, after making a vain attempt to engage Leslie in battle, marched to Inverness.

When Montrose and Huntly agreed to besiege that place, it was ill provided with provisions. From its natural position it seemed inaccessible ; but when Montrose arrived before its castle, he found that the Covenanters had managed to convey into its garrison stores of every kind. Added to his grief for the loss of so many of his friends on the scaffold, Montrose had a difficult part to play with his own immediate followers.

With fierce and savage cries they entreated Montrose to overawe their enemies by a display of cruelty towards the prisoners still in their hands. They openly demanded blood for blood, and would have persuaded Montrose, had that been possible, to treat his captives with as much brutality as the Covenanters had treated their friends. Montrose has frequently been called ‘cruel,’ but he did not exhibit any claim to the character by the way in which he answered his followers.

‘You are right,’ he said to them, ‘that the blood of honourable and innocent men calls for vengeance ; let us get it not basely, but as becomes valiant soldiers. These men, our prisoners, have nothing

to do with the murders that have been committed. They gave themselves into our hands, believing that they might safely rely on our honour to observe the laws of war ; so let us not imitate the bad example set us by the Covenanters, by making promises and breaking them, but only contend with them for bravery and virtue.'

The importunities of his friends were not more harrowing to our hero's noble spirit than the conduct of Huntly. Incapable of a base breach of honour, he was slow to realize that, far from carrying out his word, Huntly, having crossed the Spey, was trifling his time away in Moray, instead of saving the royal cause by a hearty co-operation with Montrose.

He could not brook the idea of being second in anything to Montrose. Acting upon the supposition that he was still entitled to proceed by the King's original commission, instead of deferring to the instructions of Montrose, he struck out for himself an independent line of action, and, wasting all his strength, neglected to guard that part of the country which Montrose had impressed on him the necessity of watching.

In consequence of Huntly's neglect, the Covenanters managed to convey food, arms, and ammunition into Inverness, so that when Montrose

encamped before it he found the place prepared to resist him. Had it not been for Lord Huntly's want of good faith, it had probably surrendered immediately.

He lay before Inverness for weeks, till at last, hearing that General Middleton was advancing upon him with fourteen hundred well-disciplined men from Aberdeen, he sent an urgent message to Huntly, entreating him either to join him directly ; or, if he preferred it, Montrose proposed to fall back, for he doubted not he would soon overthrow Middleton's army with their united forces.

Our hero made the last proposition because his scouts had brought him word that the Gordons' country was likely to be wasted and ravaged by the fast approaching enemy, and he doubted Huntly's willingness to leave it unprotected.

'Tell Montrose,' was Huntly's scornful reply, 'I need no assistance from him to drive the enemy from my border. I will attend to my own matters myself.'

Thus abandoned, in reality if not in words, by the fickle Huntly, no other course remained to Montrose than to retire before his enemy. Therefore, by taking a circuitous route, he and his army regained Strathspey in safety.

Huntly's defection, sad as it was and fatal to the

royal cause, was not so base and treacherous as the conduct of Lord Lewis Gordon. Under pretence of being anxious to befriend their leader, he beguiled the officers and men left to guard the principal fords of the River Spey, and drew off all Montrose's scouts to enable Middleton's army to cross safely into Moray.

The bait took ; and it was only when Lord Lewis had secret intelligence conveyed to him, that he dismissed the officers from so ill-timed a feast. As they were leaving his castle he jeered at them, and told them they had better hasten to Montrose, 'who would have a sharper bout of it than he had had at Selkirk !'

Fortunately Montrose was not entrapped, as the crafty Gordon had hoped he might be (for, ever changing sides, trusted by neither, that fickle and unprincipled young nobleman had now gone over to Argyle's party) ; and by hurried marches our hero escaped into Strathspey. But Lord Huntly's defection carried weight with it, in spite of the indignation it inspired in the minds of even his own clan. Montrose realized the truth of the proverb, that it is difficult to prop up a failing cause ; for such, in spite of the honesty, valour, and devotion of many of its adherents, the cause of royalty in Scotland really was.

Huntly, anxious to show that he was acting independently of Montrose, attacked and took Aberdeen; but the easy conquest of a place more loyal than disloyal to Charles, did the royal cause no good, for Huntly adopted no measures to follow up his success.

The Earl of Seaforth had been lately brought over to the royal side. When he saw how Huntly was playing Montrose false, the crafty Earl began to think that perhaps he had better make peace with Argyle; which, in an underhand way, he accordingly did.

The treachery and desertion of his friends sorely tried our hero's generous spirit. A deeper trial was, however, at hand for Montrose. At the time that he lay before Inverness, Charles, infatuated to the last, was about to take the step that for ever sealed his doom.

Across the border, along the hills and dales of that heather-clad land, a messenger was speeding with a letter from Charles to Montrose to tell him of his plans.

But before telling you how Montrose received the news, I must digress to describe the poor King's position in England during all the time our hero was fighting for him in Scotland.

The Scottish army had marched into England, bent on carrying into execution a coalition with the

English republicans ; not so much because their leaders approved of their contest with Charles, as because they desired to spread the doctrines of the Covenant over the two kingdoms.

Aided by such powerful allies, the battle of Marston Moor was fought and won ; and in all probability, but for the victories gained by Montrose, the unhappy monarch would have given up the game, as one played out and lost.

The gleam of hope inspired by the Marquis's success in Scotland deferred the evil hour. Charles temporized, treated, and then broke off negotiations with the Parliament, whose army at that time had passed into the hands of the unscrupulous but able Cromwell.

After the battle of Naseby, the King took refuge at Oxford. The more moderate leaders, such as Essex and others of the republican party in England, who had taken up arms against their King out of sincere affection to their country, and were unprepared to proceed to greater lengths, had been displaced by Oliver Cromwell. Sir Thomas Fairfax was the General, and Cromwell the Lieutenant-general, of the army that defeated Charles at Naseby.

In vain a Westminster conference for three years had been discussing the forms of worship that

were to replace the time-honoured liturgy of the Reformed Catholic Church of England. The divines assembled there could not agree with the Presbyterians owing to the Independents. That party, who principally composed the army that followed Cromwell, were for entirely abolishing the clerical character. As they were a formidable sect, and made a powerful stand against any who did not agree with their peculiar views,—which were, that any congregation of Christians meeting together formed a Church in themselves, independent of any religious government,—the Scottish Covenanters were beginning to see that their principal aim in rebelling against Charles had failed.

At heart the Scotch have always been loyal ; and although, blinded by fanaticism, they still detested the King's Episcopal views, they were disgusted with their failure, and would have withdrawn from England, had they not still lingered in hope of securing payment for their services and troops.

Informed by his spies of the state of matters between the Scots and the English, Charles, almost ruined in purse, with scarcely any army left, formed the fatal resolution of throwing himself on the mercy of the Scotch.

He fancied that, at the sight of their monarch, the ancient loyalty of the race would revive ; and, on the

27th of April 1646, disguised as a postillion, he left Oxford, and after eleven days' travelling presented himself before the Scottish army, then at Newark.

So imminent was the danger of his falling into the hands of the Parliamentary army, that the monarch of all England, accompanied by only two faithful friends, rode behind the baggage of one of them, the better to escape detection.

The English Parliament had not calculated on this sudden movement, and proclaimed it to be instant death to any one who should harbour or conceal the unhappy King. The Scots, unprepared for his arrival, for a while treated him respectfully, although virtually he was their prisoner. Before taking so momentous a step, he had written to our hero a letter, dated the 18th of April 1646, in which he declared his motives, and confidence in the Scots, urging Montrose to lose no time in joining him.

Although externally the King received all due respect when he reached the Covenanters' camp, he had to submit to ill-disguised insolence from the leaders of the party.

He who had hoped 'for freedom in conscience and honour,' was imperiously requested by the president of the committee, Earl Lothian, 'to sign the Covenant,' and 'bid James Graham lay down his arms.' The King in a dignified manner

told Lothian, 'He who made you an Earl made James Graham a Marquis.'

It was indeed a hard lot to bear the taunts levelled at him by the fanatics of the Covenant, but Charles Stuart could bear the burden of his fate with grandeur. The anecdote of one of the Presbyterians, when preaching before him, giving out the fifty-second Psalm, is too well known to bear repetition ; but when the King was anxious to give the watch-word himself to the Scottish sentinels, Leslie bluntly told him 'to spare himself the trouble, as he was the elder soldier of the two.'

Persecution, however, effected the ends of the King's enemies. Although in giving himself up he had bargained for the safety of all who had fought for him during those fearful civil wars, he was not permitted to see his faithful Montrose again. The last concession was wrung from him ; he consented to give up those fortresses still holding out for him, and sent word to the old Lord Worcester to surrender Raglan Castle to the Puritans.

The Lord of Raglan was sixty-nine years old, but he had a high and lofty spirit. For weeks the Welsh fortress held out ; till at last, provisions failing, Lord Worcester was compelled to yield to his enemies, and surrender. The last place that held out for Charles the First was Raglan Castle. Its

owner left it with the mien of a victor, although he was never again to gaze on its princely halls. His adversary Fairfax could not but admire his heroism.

The Marquis of Worcester had lost all he possessed for Charles ; but the brave old man bore his misfortunes with dignity and fortitude,—true to his principle, faithful to his King, and believing that ‘noblesse oblige.’

But the fall of Raglan was not till the middle of August 1646, and therefore much later than the period at which his Scottish champion—a champion as true as the Marquis of Worcester—received the news of Charles’s ill-advised surrender to the Covenanters.

One sacrifice more did the Scots still require of Charles. They had taken him to Newcastle, from which place he was forced to write a letter to Montrose, dated the 16th of May 1646, in which he commanded him to disband his army and retire to France.

When Montrose received the King’s letter, he was busily engaged in making preparations to carry on the war. He was doing all that lay in his power, in spite of Huntly’s previous conduct, to induce the Gordons to join him. With Charles’s letter in his hand, charging him so plainly to give up the contest

and abandon all hope of saving his King, Montrose, downcast, astonished, and dismayed, was sure that such a command had been extorted from, and not freely given by, the King. He felt overwhelmed. How would his soldiers fare if he obeyed? Fear for their fate, anxiety for Charles, and, above all, that unflinching devotion to duty, which from first to last had marked his career, all in turn disturbed his mind; but at last anxiety and fear for the hapless prince, no longer a free agent, predominated; and, actuated by a wish to consult all who had supported the royal cause in Scotland, he resolved to call a great meeting of the Scottish Cavaliers that they might consult together.

Strange to say, it was Sir John Hurry, a former enemy, who, together with Sir John Innes, were despatched at this critical moment by the Marquis to Huntly.

Our hero, laying aside in the danger of their common cause all personal feelings, desired his friends, both of whom were on very good terms with Huntly, to tell the chief of the Gordons that he would 'go to his castle'—'if he thought fit.'

'The King,' replied Huntly, 'had sent him letters to the same effect. He intended to obey the King's orders. The King's commands were decided; and there was nothing to consult about.'

In vain Sir John Hurry and his companion urged that Montrose was as anxious as Huntly to obey his sovereign's commands implicitly, but that he was in doubt 'as to whether or not they had not been extorted from him by force,' and that 'it behoved them all to provide for their adherents.' The peevish Huntly, whose jealousy of Montrose, and lukewarm conduct, had been the main cause that the whole of the north part of Scotland had not unanimously declared for the King, would give no other answer. 'He had decided for himself,' he said, and 'would have nothing to do with anybody else.'

To the King's letter Montrose replied that he was, as ever, ready to lay down his very life for Charles. He entreated him to write to him fully, and to tell him particularly whether or not he felt safe with the Covenanters. Well might Montrose, who knew them so well, mistrust his monarch's guardians. Did the King, Montrose inquired, need his services? Did the King really bid him disband an army which had well-nigh reconquered Scotland for him? If so, how could he save the lives and properties of his followers?

To this urgent letter our hero received no reply, other than an official order from the English Parliament, that he was required to lay down his arms and disband his army.

Montrose had received his commission from Charles, and he would therefore take no orders except from his royal master. He wrote again very urgently; and then the King wrote a letter, dated the fifteenth of June 1646, in which he enjoined Montrose to disband his troops, and retire abroad.

After receiving the King's positive commands, Montrose no longer refused. Huntly and Aboyne even took upon themselves to threaten Montrose, if he hesitated any longer; so, yielding obedience to his sovereign, though with a heavy heart, the gallant leader of so many victories prepared to capitulate.

Charles was intensely anxious to save Montrose, by getting him safely out of the country. He knew that the Covenanters, who detested Montrose, would take advantage of the slightest delay to retaliate on one whose victories over them had been so exemplary, and therefore urged the Marquis to lose no time in conferring with General Middleton, who was charged to see the terms of capitulation carried out. About the middle of July, Montrose and Middleton met by agreement in Angus. Close to a river, the two opponents, enemies no longer—for Montrose could appreciate Middleton's honest and soldierly character—met, and for two hours discussed the terms of capitulation. The Earl of Crawford, Sir John Hurry, and Montrose were exempted from the

general pardon, which was to be extended to all those who had taken up arms under Montrose ; but they were to be permitted to retire abroad, *provided* they sailed before *the first of September*. After his conference with Middleton, Montrose, who undertook to see that his followers carried out the terms of his convention, and retired to their homes, determined to be as loyal to his word as he had been to his King, and to immediately disband his Redshanks.

His meeting with Middleton took place on the 22d of July 1646. Eight days later he took leave of his followers at Rattray, in Angus.

Montrose was then just thirty-four years of age, in the prime of life ; young enough to keenly feel the disappointments of his position, yet old enough to bear them with manly fortitude. He tried to comfort his men, by telling them that he trusted an honourable peace was close at hand, and that as long as the King was saved by their submission, the sacrifices made by himself and his followers would be light and easily borne ; but at heart he was anything but sanguine.

With all the enthusiasm and devotion of their race, the Highlanders cast themselves at Montrose's feet, begging him to permit them to accompany him into exile. Such a request it was impossible to grant.

‘Farewell! and farewell!’ cried Montrose, as he tore himself with deep emotion from the kneeling men; and riding slowly away, he and the few chosen companions of his exile passed out of sight.

A few words will tell the remainder of this part of the sad story.

The Irish brigade, commanded by Lord Crawford, who was proscribed with our hero, returned to Ireland, and Lord Airlie and others of the Marquis’s truest friends returned to their own homes.

Thus ended Montrose’s gallant but ineffectual campaign for his King. It had not, indeed, been all in vain. That devoted little band, following with so much devotion the chivalrous and high-minded Montrose, have left to their descendants and their country the picture of a noble and disinterested attempt made by gallant faithful men in defence of a principle — as they believed — of right against might.

Montrose’s dangers did not quite end on that farewell day. The Covenanters in Edinburgh and Glasgow thought that General Middleton had been far too lenient in his agreement. They longed for some apparent breach of the convention that they might seize the gallant Marquis, and carry him to the scaffold; but his life was to be spared a while. He was destined to act another part in the page of

history. He hurried home to Old Montrose to prepare for his exile. Strange to say, Sir John Hurry, his former enemy, but now his firmest friend, was the only companion permitted by Montrose to accompany him.

The King acknowledged Montrose's services in a very grateful letter, and especially impressed on him the necessity of strictly adhering to the date fixed for his departure, although he also bid him 'linger as long' as he possibly could. Perchance the hopeless monarch dreaded his faithful servant's absence, yet knew that were he 'to linger,' his fate might be sealed by his enemy's implacable fury.

In the treaty effected between Charles and his subjects, one article had especially stipulated for the Marquis's departure. According to that treaty, the ship and all its equipments for the voyage were to be provided in good time by the Edinburgh committee.

The time for his embarkation drew on. Montrose had bidden his friends farewell. He had arrived at a port in Angus, from which he was to depart; and, attended by a few friends and servants, was ready to obey the sentence of exile that had been passed upon him.

It was by no means, however, the intention of the Covenanters to allow him to escape so easily. No

doubt among their number there were many honourable and high-minded men ; but there were others who were eager to force Montrose to break his agreement, trusting in that way they might entrap him. They hated the idea of his escaping their fury ; they thirsted for his blood.

The Covenanters tried to induce several who professed friendship to the Marquis, but were enemies at heart, to flatter the great hero of the Scottish civil wars.

‘Twere a pity,’ they urged, ‘so gallant a soldier should be sent into exile. If, by chance, the King could not come to terms with the English, who would he want but Montrose to fight his battles?’

The Marquis knew too well the value of such arguments. So, after taking a sad and long farewell of his home at Old Montrose, and of such friends as could not accompany him, he repaired in August to the given rendezvous. When he got there, however, no ship was to be seen. The day was rapidly drawing nigh, on which, according to the treaty, he was to quit his native land ; but the promised vessel that was to bear him safely from its shores had not arrived ! Was there not treachery somewhere ?

At last, on the 31st of August, a ship arrived at the haven of Montrose.

It was, as the Marquis soon discovered, ordered to

convey him to a place appointed by the commissioners, the name of which the captain insolently boasted was only known to himself. He was a Covenanter of a most violent kind; and when the Marquis told him that he was ready to embark, he merely replied that the vessel would not be fit for sea for some days, and that he was afraid to put off, till the ship, which was a very old and cranky one, had been properly refitted and victualled for its voyage.

The crew on board this wretched bark were as ill-conditioned and surly as their captain. What was the Marquis to do? To hesitate was, as he well knew, to be lost. The mouth of the Esk was watched by English men-of-war, and our hero recognised the difficulties of his position. Those friends who had accompanied him to the place of embarkation were all anxious to persuade him that his only chance of safety lay in an immediate return into the Highlands.

The captain of the ship provided by the Covenanters, they argued, was evidently bent on preventing his departure, by throwing every obstacle in his way.

The ocean swarmed with men-of-war eager to seize him if he set sail too late, and the chances of escape among the hills of Badenoch were more

numerous than his chances of getting off by sea. Montrose reflected that if he gave the smallest handle to his enemies, the King's life might be endangered ; so, with all the generosity of his nature, he resolved, come what might, to keep his word, and depart as soon as he could.

Fortunately a Norwegian bark was lying in the port of Stonehaven. A bargain was quickly made, and Montrose immediately sent off Sir John Hurry, Mr. Drummond, his brother Henry, his chaplain, and a few other friends and servants, and ordered them all to set sail for Norway ; which they accordingly did, on the third of September 1646.

Having provided for his friends, he then effected his own escape in disguise.

The very evening that they set sail, passing for a servant in attendance on his faithful chaplain, Mr. Wood, Montrose hailed a small fishing smack, and bid the boatman carry him and his companion out to sea. The wind was fair, and the little bark, carrying in so humble a guise the great Scottish Cavalier, drifted out with the tide of the harbour, none suspecting how precious a freight it bore away.

As he watched the receding shores of that Scotland for whose sake he had dared and won, and dared and lost so much, Montrose little thought how and when he was to see it again ! He and his

chaplain reached a vessel bound for Norway in safety, and dismissing the little wherry which had saved their lives, were soon afterwards safely on their way to Norway.

Thus ended the first part of our hero's story, and the civil war in Scotland in favour of King Charles the First.

Well might his disbanded soldiers, who, in spite of promises, were still persecuted for the love they had borne him,

‘ Be shaken
With the weight of such a blow.
He was gone—their prince, their idol,
Whom they loved and worshipped so !’

To return—how ?





CHAPTER VI.

'Great, good, and just, could I but rate
My grief and thy too rigid fate,
I'd weep the world in such a strain
As it should deluge once again.'

—MARQUIS OF MONTROSE.

VIRTUALLY a prisoner, how fared the unhappy King after the departure of Montrose?

The Independents were his greatest enemies, for they were republicans equally in politics and in religion. They longed to overthrow the King, but felt compelled to keep up an outward appearance of decency in their behaviour towards him.

Charles expressed himself willing to come to terms with his subjects; but the conditions they proposed for his acceptance were hard indeed.

They only accorded him ten short days to consider whether he could sign the Covenant,—a step to which, as an honourable man remembering that he

had taken the coronation oath, the King was most averse. Charles was, nevertheless, strongly urged by the more moderate party in Scotland to sign that document ; for they trusted that, if he were persuaded to do so, he might even at that eleventh hour be saved. Great was the triumph of the Independents when it was openly announced that the King refused their terms, while the more moderate party dreaded, with reason, the prospect before them ; for was it not an axe and a scaffold for the unhappy King, so conscientiously determined not to abandon his religious opinions ?

Montrose, sailing away from Scotland, still scheming and dreaming how best he might serve Charles, who had entrusted him, it was alleged, with secret instructions to serve him abroad, little knew that the Scots were preparing to meet their financial difficulties by an act of gross and shameful treachery.

The Independents longed to obtain possession of Charles's person ; while the Scots, unable to keep him, and disgusted by his refusal to sanction the Presbyterian forms of religion in England as well as Scotland, had no longer any object in guarding one who in so evil an hour had thrown himself on their protection. It is difficult to sufficiently condemn either those who sold or those who bought their monarch. The Scots, being anxious to be paid for

their services in England, amounting to nearly two millions,—three years' arrears,—agreed to give up the King provided that sum were paid down to them. This bargain was not concluded without a vehement protest by a number of Scottish noblemen, who, though attached to the Covenant, abhorred the crime of selling their lawful sovereign.

The Duke of Hamilton, followed by the Earl of Lanark, nobly voted against the crime, after courageously defending the condemned monarch.

When asked how he voted, the Earl cried: 'No! As God shall have mercy on my soul at the great day, rather than consent to this vote I would have my head struck off at the Market Cross of Edinburgh.' When the fatal deed was done, and the assembly had sealed Charles's fate, he exclaimed, 'This is the blackest Saturday Scotland has ever seen!'

Forewarned of the fact by a private letter handed to him while playing at chess with one of his attendants, Charles bore his great misfortunes with calmness and self-possession.

The Scots were paid the amount of their disgraceful bargain! and Charles, on the 20th of February 1647, was handed over to the English commissioners, and taken by them to Holmby in Northamptonshire.

It was not long before Cromwell sent an armed band to seize the King's person.

'Your warrant,' said Charles to the officer who removed him, when, in reply to the King's inquiry as to who had ordered his change of residence, he pointed through the latticed window of Holmby House to his armed men, 'is indeed written in characters fair and legible;' and he then accompanied them in a dignified manner to the headquarters of the Puritan army on Triplow Heath in Cambridgeshire. In the meantime, Montrose landed at Bergen in Norway, and after hastening into Denmark, with the intention of interesting the reigning King Christian in his royal master's troubles, crossed the Baltic, and while at Hamburg, heard of the shameful treaty between the Scots and English.

He knew that Henrietta Maria, who had taken refuge in Paris, was almost entirely governed by her favourite, Lord Jermyn, who by no means welcomed the idea of Montrose's presence at the French Court. Before leaving Scotland, the Marquis had endeavoured to serve Charles by organizing a Northern party, who mutually promised to protect Charles by force of arms. This 'engagement,' as it was called, had been made known to Charles, and also to the Queen.

After the downfall of all his schemes, Montrose must have possessed great courage to dream of another enterprise in favour of Charles ; yet even before he quitted Scotland, he appears to have planned a new expedition, the details of which he sent to Queen Henrietta by his friend Lord Crawford.

That nobleman reached Paris before our hero, and his proposition, which was to raise thirty thousand men and rescue the King, strange to say, met with but little encouragement from Henrietta, who was under Jermyn's influence, and whose jealousy of Montrose made him anxious to oppose any scheme that emanated from him.

Whatever the Queen, influenced by selfish counsels, may have thought, Charles seems for some time to have clung to the hope of escape.

Allaster MacColl did not disband his troops at the same time as Montrose. The men he had taken away into Argyllshire were still enlisted in the royal favour, and supported Huntly, who, after having refused to assist Montrose when help might materially have aided the cause, still appeared in arms for the Cavaliers' cause as late as December 1646, the end of the year in which Montrose left Scotland.

Huntly, however, was forced to retire before the

experienced troops whom the Scotch sent against him under General Leslie. Finding himself likely to be defeated, he fled to the mountains of Badenoch, whose peasantry were devoted to him. General Leslie was well aware how unequal would be a combat in a land where every cave and hill, if necessary, could be turned into a fortress to defend the chief of the Gordons. He therefore, being a very able general, determined upon caution. He appeared to abandon the pursuit of Huntly, and retired to Strathbogie, which he took, as well as the castles of Lesmore, the Bog of Gicht, and a place called Lochtanner in Aboyne.

The capture of Ruthven in Badenoch and Inverlochy followed; both fortresses were great losses to the Highland Cavaliers. The former castle must have been very strong; for often, in more ancient times, had it been gallantly defended by the Gordons. About sixty years before it fell into Leslie's hands, a mighty chief, Lauchlan Mackintosh, head of the Clanchattan clan, had tried in vain to take it, and fell wounded in the attempt; so that when Leslie had garrisoned it, and left Middleton in charge of the province, he thought he might safely pursue MacColl into Argyllshire.

In spite of the almost impregnable position of the country, MacColl, brave and courageous, but rash,

foolishly allowed his enemies to get through a pass into Kintyre, which placed his foe, well supported with cavalry, in as good a position as himself.

After a long battle, MacColl, accompanied by almost all his men, retreated to the sea-shore, where they soon took to their boats and retired safely into the Western Islands.

The unhappy remnant left by MacColl retreated to a fort called Dunavertie. It was a very ancient castle, standing, as its name signifies, on a point of land. There was no water to supply the fort, so that as soon as the small quantity taken in by the garrison was quite exhausted, they were compelled to submit unconditionally to the enemy.

Unhappily for the unfortunate garrison, Leslie was accompanied by a Presbyterian clergyman named Neaves, who, although talented and reputed pious, was a red-hot fanatic.

When he saw Leslie hesitating to give the order for their destruction, he stepped forward and reminded him that Saul had been cursed for sparing the Amalekites.

Argyle appears to have been present at the horrible scene of carnage that ensued, for he and Leslie are described by a historian as positively 'wading in blood up to their ankles.' As one by one the garrison marched out of the fort, they were

all, with one exception, shot down—Leslie turning, when all was over, to Neaves, and asking him: ‘Have you not for once got your fill of blood?’

Thence the Covenanters hastened over to Islay, where he found MacColl’s father, Colkeitoch, and about two hundred men in a fort on a hill like Dunavertie, called Dunnivey. Again the lack of water favoured the besiegers, who, however, spared the lives of the garrison; all except Colkeitoch, who was hanged.

Leslie was equally successful in Jura and Mull, which latter place was garrisoned by the Maclean clan.

That chief saved his own men by the sacrifice of fourteen Irishmen, and the loss of several castles.

This expedition of Huntly’s ended by the capture and execution of three of his family, and his own imprisonment in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh, while the Covenanters celebrated the massacre of so many ‘malignants’ by a public fast. If, however, the Covenanters believed that they had finally quelled the Cavaliers, they were mistaken.

Henrietta Maria had found a safe asylum for herself in France, although the French monarch turned a deaf ear to her entreaties for aid to Charles.

All this time our hero, constant to his purpose, was hurrying on to Paris, eager in order, if possible,

to negotiate for Charles's rescue. The Queen, who did not intend quarrelling with Montrose, wrote very kindly to him, although (again influenced by the double-dealing Jermyn) she tried to prevent his visiting Paris. Probably Henrietta Maria, thoughtless, and therefore selfish, dreaded an appeal in behalf of Charles to the French King, as likely to injure, if unsuccessful, her own safety. She and Jermyn therefore hit on a scheme to prevent the arrival of a person whom both, if really loyal to Charles, should have warmly welcomed.

They sent one of Charles's gentlemen named Ashburnham to meet him ; and the messenger did all he could to persuade Montrose to return immediately to Scotland.

After reading a letter from the Queen very much to the same purpose, our hero resolutely refused to carry out any of Ashburnham's suggestions.

The King, he said, had ordered him to wait in France for his 'further commands,' and he was certain that Her Majesty the Queen would not wish him to disobey Charles's orders.

Montrose was in Flanders, on his road to Paris, when this curious meeting took place.

Determined to try and prevent his arrival there, Ashburnham then resorted to another plan of action.

He pretended to have the deepest interest in our

hero. 'Why,' urged he, 'should you sacrifice all your future prospects to a falling cause? Why not go back to Scotland and make your peace with the Covenanters, and keep yourself in readiness for better times?' This crafty messenger even declared that he was ready to secure Charles's full consent to such a scheme.

'No one,' replied Montrose, 'is readier than I to obey His Majesty, but I cannot obey him by acting in the manner you propose—dishonourable alike to him and to me.'

Independently of his dread of losing his influence with Henrietta, should the Marquis appear in Paris, Jermyn was very angry that the King had appointed Montrose ambassador in Paris, for up to this time Jermyn himself had filled the post.

To please the Scots, Charles the First had been compelled to sacrifice Montrose by consenting to his exile, and the forfeiture of all his estates. To appease the Marquis's anger at those conditions, Charles had made him ambassador in France.

When he arrived in Paris, Montrose found that no letters or credentials had been sent as promised him by the King; and all he could therefore do, was to entreat Henrietta to allow him to make another attempt to save Charles, for by this time Montrose knew of his having been given up by the

Scots, and to furnish him with a small sum of money.

Henrietta Maria had, however, no power to help Montrose. Her money was appropriated by the dissolute and scheming courtiers about her (many of whom were even paid by the rebels to report all that passed at her Court to the English Government).

With a heavy heart, then, the Marquis quitted Paris and retired to Germany.

There were several men at Paris who were far more capable of appreciating the beauty of Montrose's character than the heartless courtiers about the English Queen. Among the brilliant throng surrounding the French Monarch at that epoch, none were more witty or celebrated than the Cardinal de Retz.

He describes our hero as 'Montrose, a Scottish nobleman, head of the house of Graham—the only man in the world who has even quite realized my idea of a hero—such a hero as Plutarch describes to us in his Lives! He has sustained the cause of the King his master in his own country with a greatness of soul unequalled in our age!'

After the unhappy monarch had fled to the Isle of Wight, various intrigues were set on foot in both Scotland and England, which more or less, although most of them were ostensibly undertaken in the

King's name, were simply begun from selfish motives of aggrandizement. Huntly's efforts had failed, and he himself was in prison ; but new champions had sprung up for the monarchy, and, strange to say, in the persons of two men, both of whom were rivals, and had been bitter enemies to the King. The first was Hamilton, the second Argyle.

A great split had long before this period divided the Presbyterians in England and Scotland from the Independents, whose power all who disagreed with them—the majority in both countries—dreaded far more than the bad government of Charles or the tyranny of the Covenanters.

In all revolutions there is something to be said in favour of both sides ; and although all that is romantic and chivalrous in the English character was deeply stirred by the fate of Charles the First, and the dignity with which he met death, there is no doubt that his own errors as a king greatly tended to his doom. His inflexible persistence in imposing his own religious views too urgently on his people, as well as his arbitrary government, had drawn to the opposite side many a man whose adherence to the Puritans resulted solely from motives of the purest patriotism.

But such men shrank back appalled and disgusted with the fanaticism of the Independents.

Among the former, many were members of the Parliament who began to dread the ascendancy of the army. The step taken by Cromwell when he seized the King's person, more than ever opened their eyes to the danger of allowing military counsels to prevail in the government. Before, however, they had time to carry out their intention and commit Cromwell to the Tower, that clever man had eluded them and placed himself at the head of the troops.

The English Presbyterians were perfectly aghast when they saw Cromwell at the head of affairs, and immediately entered into private negotiations with Charles, preferring even an Episcopalian King to the fanaticism of the Independents.

Montrose mistrusted the leaders of the Scottish Government, and he therefore heard with grave apprehension, that after having three times marched into England *against* the King, they were now contemplating an enterprise in his favour.

They began, as a preliminary step, to treat with the Queen. They pretended the deepest concern and indignation at the fact of Charles's imprisonment, and soon got the Queen's ear. She knew well enough that they would gain no advocate in Montrose. When at length she divulged her schemes, Montrose with difficulty controlled his emotion so as to answer her calmly.

He entreated her to put no faith in Argyle, Hamilton, or any of the Covenanters. He pointed out that the leaders of the party, now apparently so anxious to uphold the monarchy, were the very men who had, for money, betrayed the King to the English! He proposed to her a middle course.

‘Let me,’ urged Montrose, ‘return to Scotland and raise an army for the royal cause among such as are known to be true to him. Those forces, if it please your Majesty, can be, as it were, a reserve, ready to help the Scottish Covenanters should they really intend to fight for the King, or to punish them should they (as I really fear) intend a second piece of treachery!’

But all the eloquence of which our hero was so able a master—his pleading face and earnest voice—were powerless with Henrietta Maria.

The Queen, governed by a faction, accepted Presbyterian aid. Sorrowfully Montrose left her presence and Paris. He left it suddenly in March 1648, determined not to witness such a picture of ruin as the royal cause committed to its enemies, but by retiring to Germany, to serve the King in his own way.

Montrose was famous all over Europe. Cardinal Mazarin would gladly have retained near his own sovereign a hero whose deeds were well known in all

foreign courts; but while he was attempting to carry out those views, by offering Montrose high rank and a military command, Ferdinand the Third, Emperor of Germany, had also made overtures to the Marquis, which Montrose, eager to escape from the French Court, gladly accepted.

He hurriedly left the French capital, and got into Austria by way of Geneva, Bavaria, and the Tyrol.

Finding the Emperor had left Vienna, Montrose joined him at Prague, where he was received with the greatest possible distinction.

Although Ferdinand the Third no longer maintained the same State as Charles the Fourth of Germany,—who was served, we are told, on State occasions, by the seven Electors of the empire, while three archbishops carried the seals of Germany, Italy, and Arles,—there was still retained much Court ceremony. The deference paid to rank, and the higher morality of the Germans, better suited Montrose's stately character than the looseness of the Versailles Court.

Ferdinand made Montrose a Field-marshal, dating his patent from the year 1648; and when the former left Prague, the Marquis rode at his right hand.

But not even such brilliant favours could banish the image of his fallen King from his constant heart.

His cause was ever present to his imagination as an aim to be pursued, served, and rescued ; for already rumours of his coming fate were floating on the air.

The Emperor gave him an independent command directly under himself ; but although gratefully accepted, the post was accepted by Montrose only on one condition, and that was, that whenever his old master needed him, he should be free to return and serve him. The service for which Montrose was selected was the levying of recruits, and the Emperor yielded to our hero's entreaties that his sphere of action should be as near England as it could be.

The Emperor gave him letters of introduction to his brother the Archduke Leopold, Governor of the Netherlands ; but as the hostile armies of France did not allow travellers to enter Flanders by the direct way, Montrose was compelled to take a very circuitous route to get to Brussels. He embarked from Dantzic for Denmark, where he was enthusiastically welcomed ; and after enjoying the highest honours for a few days, crossed over into Friesland, and at length reached Brussels.

He found that Leopold, defeated by Condé, had retired to Tournay, whither he hurried to present his credentials. The Archduke received him with much attention ; and when he returned to Brussels,

towards the end of the year, Montrose accompanied him to that city, where he was rejoined soon after by his nephew Lord Napier, whom he had left behind him in Paris, and several other English and Scottish Cavaliers.

But Montrose was not destined by fate to unsheath his sword in the Archduke's cause. A summons was at hand to that loyalest of all gentlemen, which was to call him back to Scotland.

The better to understand our hero's history, we must return to King Charles, then a lonely prisoner in Carisbrooke Castle.

The Scottish Covenanters were now divided into two parties. They had determined to invade England, and revenge the breach of faith which they considered had been shown them by the Independents, in not establishing the Presbyterian faith in England. Argyle headed this section of the Covenanters; but there was another party, led by the Hamiltons, who maintained that the object in invading England was to rescue Charles, whom they declared to be unjustly kept prisoner, against the conditions of their treaty with the English. The King had signed a secret agreement with these Scottish Presbyterians, that should their efforts prove successful, he would sign the Covenant; but Argyle and his followers mistrusted Charles's sin-

cerity, and would not therefore consent to any overtures for placing him again on the throne. The consequence was, that the Hamiltonians, who professed the greatest attachment to the King's person, headed a large party, and Scotland was split up into two sections holding different opinions.

Hamilton's was a strong party; many of those who had fought under Montrose joining him, under the belief that he was loyally true to the King. Scotland being thus rent into two factions, Hamilton raised a large army, amounting to more than forty thousand; while the English Loyalists, inspirited by the hope of Scottish aid, prepared to rise all over the kingdom, and even appeared openly in many parts of Wales wearing blue and white ribbons, inscribed with the words, 'We long to see our King!'

So universal was the sympathy awakened by Charles's sufferings in the minds of the loyal English and Scotch, that his rescue might have been accomplished, and his cruel fate averted, but for the determined opposition of Argyle and his followers.

They formally protested against Hamilton's expedition, although the Northern Parliament voted him money for the purpose.

Argyle's party were called 'Protesters;' Hamilton's, 'Engagers,' because they joined the association for

protecting the King's cause. Argyle well knew how to alarm Scottish fanaticism. He aroused the alarm of the General Assembly of the Kirk, who openly censured any persons joining Hamilton, and appointed a day of humiliation and fasting throughout Scotland; on which occasion the Calvinist preachers improved the opportunity by denouncing all who joined the expedition.

Argyle endeavoured to incite the Western Highlands to an armed opposition; and Hamilton lost ground by temporizing with those who opposed him instead of appealing to Parliament, with whom he was then all-powerful, to crush the rebellion in the bud.

On the 10th of June, Argyle's followers assembled in arms.

General Middleton was sent to quell so dangerous an outburst. He found the insurgents, numbering eight hundred foot and twelve hundred horsemen, drawn up at a place in Ayrshire called Mauchline Moor.

Eight ministers were with these misguided men, who went out to treat with Middleton. Nothing could exceed the power of the clergy at this time over the minds of their followers. They had persuaded the rebels that salvation alone would be theirs who fought against the 'Engagers.' The

valour of the clergy, however, soon subsided when they saw Middleton's approach ; and they immediately made terms. He promised a free pardon to all who would quietly return to their own homes ; but they would not—such was their fanaticism—accept any terms, and a conflict took place in which several lives were lost.

This encounter, easily quelled as it had been, fatally retarded Hamilton's descent into England. The delay enabled Cromwell and his party to rally their forces, and to recover their lost ground. Hamilton and his friends lost time that they could not recover ; and although, when at length on the 12th of July 1648 he began his march, he was joined by a considerable number of Royalists under Sir Marmaduke Langdale, almost all the insurrections in England in Charles's favour had been crushed, and the Scottish troops barely numbered fifteen thousand men, although forty thousand had been voted him by the Parliament.

The end of the expedition was fatal indeed. Charles was fated to be injured, not served, by his friends.

Such was the fanaticism of the day, that the Scottish Parliament had decreed that none but they who had signed the Covenant could join the Scottish army.

Sir Marmaduke Langdale, Sir Philip Musgrave, and others, who joined the Scots, were obliged to form, as it were, a separate camp. The Duke of Hamilton did not consult them; consequently, instead of marching through Yorkshire, a county devoted to the King, he dispersed his forces into Lancashire and elsewhere, and proved himself altogether unequal to the task of guiding his army southwards.

At length, on the 17th of August, Hamilton sustained a defeat at Preston in Lancashire, where the Duke believed himself perfectly secure from attack.

Sir Marmaduke Langdale, surprised by Cromwell's squadrons, received the first brunt of the battle, and resisted to the utmost; but finding that Hamilton did not reinforce him, he was compelled to beat a hasty retreat. Hamilton fled into Preston. He did not long keep that town, however; for, being pursued by the Puritans, ten thousand of his army under Baillie capitulated to Cromwell, while the leader of the expedition fled to Uttoxeter, where he followed Baillie's example and gave himself up as a prisoner of war.

Hamilton's brother, Lanerick, when he heard of his brother's capture, and the dispersion of his army, was made Commander-in-chief of the 'Engagement'

party, and endeavoured, with the aid of General Monro, to raise another army.

They gathered together about five thousand men, chiefly veterans and well-disciplined troops. Argyle also got together a small number of followers, about six hundred in number; and as the Mac-Caileam Mor's party, though fewer than the 'Engagers,' had numerous supporters in Edinburgh, Monro wisely counselled an immediate descent on the capital itself.

Lanerick, like Hamilton, was totally unsuited to be commander-in-chief. Disgusted with the course of events in England, the peers and gentry of Scotland were all eager to join in the war; but Lanerick's appointment was unpopular with them, and alienated several of the most prominent noblemen from that side.

Instead of adopting Monro's advice, Lanerick marched to Stirling, at which place Argyle, ignorant of the Loyalists' intention, had also halted on his way to Edinburgh. Argyle was at dinner when his scouts brought him word that the Loyalists were at the very gates of the city battling with his sentinels. Without a thought for any one but himself, Argyle mounted a fleet horse, and fled out of the city, leaving his hapless recruits to protect his flight, and contest the passes into Stirling.

The Clan Campbell, braver men than their craven-hearted chief, defended their posts, till, at length overpowered, they fled, many being either killed or drowned in the river.

Argyle reached Edinburgh safely. Lanerick was by no means trusted by his own party. Whether from timidity, or perhaps from a not unnatural dislike to draw down upon himself as much odium as Montrose had done by shedding so much Scotch blood, Lanerick, instead of boldly meeting the Protesters in battle, meanly temporized with them, and at length actually capitulated, agreeing to disband his whole army.

Thus ended the last effort of the loyal portion of the Scottish Covenanters for King Charles.

When Lanerick's soldiers were told of the disgraceful capitulation, their grief and indignation knew no bounds. Among their number were many who had fought in our hero's army, and had joined Lanerick in the full belief that he really intended to fight for Charles, and, if possible, save him.

'Oh for Montrose again!' cried they; 'had he but been here, instead of being vanquished, we should have restored peace to our poor land!'

Argyle's party, having now acquired the ascendancy, determined to act promptly. Argyle invited Cromwell into Scotland, received him in Edinburgh

with great state and pomp, and finally settled with him the execution of the King,—an act on which the Independents had long been bent.

It had been Cromwell's object to conciliate the Covenanters, as long as he was ambitious of obtaining their consent to the King's death; but that act once determined on, he threw off the mask, and excluded from the House of Commons all members the least in favour of the King. One Colonel Pride, who had been a common drayman, was the instrument selected by Cromwell to 'purge' the Parliament; and when he had forcibly prevented any but such as were known to be firm Independents or Republicans from entering the Commons, the House, consisting of only from fifty to sixty members, declared that the treaty then pending between Charles and the Parliament was null and void. From that hour Charles's fate was sealed.

He was removed to Hurst Castle, a dreary prison in Hampshire; at high tide, almost surrounded by the sea. During his imprisonment at Hurst, his hair turned almost white; while his pale and dejected face, as he paced the sands, showed that he had begun to realize the hopelessness of his cause. With great dignity he resigned himself to his impending fate.

Hamilton, after his surrender, was imprisoned at

Windsor. When the King was taken to Windsor, the Duke obtained permission to see him.

‘My dear master, my dear master!’ he cried, throwing himself at the King’s feet.

‘I have indeed been a dear master to you,’ exclaimed the King, as Hamilton’s guards rushed in to shorten that final interview between Charles and his once all-powerful favourite.

The Prince of Wales all this time was residing at the Hague; and Montrose, who was at Brussels, made him an offer of his services.

Prince Charles detested the Presbyterians; and after hearing of Hamilton’s failure in England, and Lanerick’s loss in Scotland, resolved to send for Montrose. He wrote to him in the early part of January 1649, and on the 28th of that month, two days before Charles’s execution, we find him answering the Prince’s letter, and assuring him that ‘he never had any passion on earth’ stronger than his devotion to his King, whose fate was but to herald his own.

Sir Edward Hyde, afterwards famous as Chancellor Clarendon, was at that time the Prince’s chief adviser at the Hague. He and Prince Rupert were both friendly disposed to Montrose.

Between Hyde and Montrose letters had passed; and an interview had been arranged, the very place

being chosen, at which, so it was projected, the Prince and our hero might meet, when the news of the King's execution reached Brussels.

The blow was none the less felt that it had been partially anticipated. Rumours had preceded the fatal news, and Montrose was too far-sighted a man not to know, that after Cromwell had gone the length of trying the King in Westminster Hall, his death would follow.

Condemned to death on the 27th of January 1649, three days after the King met his fate with a fortitude that redeemed all his errors and previous weaknesses of character, and which caused an instant revulsion of feeling in his favour, even among the spectators of the tragedy.

When the news reached Montrose, it affected him, as any one may imagine who has followed his romantic history, and seen how enthusiastically he had devoted himself to his King. Loyalty in these days was a duty; but with Montrose it was a passion and an expiation.

Montrose, horror-stricken, indignant, and furious, fell unconscious to the ground when the news came of the King's execution. When he recovered, he gazed on the many kind and sympathizing faces around him, groaned aloud, and hid his face in his hands.

‘How, after this, can we live on?’ he cried. ‘We ought to die with our King. God bear me witness, henceforward life will have no charms for me.’

His chaplain tried to rouse him from despair.

‘Die, my lord!’ exclaimed Dr. Wishart; ‘on the contrary, talk not of death! Summon up all your fortitude and courage. Revenge the death—the murder—of your royal master, and support his son. Such a course will be a better honour to pay the monarch, who has been killed. Your own death would only gratify your enemies.’

The worthy chaplain in speaking of revenge had touched the right chord. Montrose immediately roused himself. Drawing himself to his full height, he stretched his hand towards heaven, and, as one inspired, he cried—‘Yes! Yes! I will live! But I vow, before God and man, to devote my life to avenge the royal martyr’s death, and to place his son upon the throne!’

He then retired to his own room, where he remained for three whole days and nights. On the third, Dr. Wishart besought him to let him see him. Montrose, who had forbidden any one to approach, admitted his chaplain, who found him pale and sorrow-stricken, but resolute and firm, meditating on his vow.

As soon as Prince Charles had in some measure

recovered from the shock of his father's death, he sent for Montrose. Our hero hastened to the Hague, and stood in the presence of the second Charles.

Hamilton's execution followed that of the King's, and a reign of despotism was established in England. Scotland was aghast at the King's fate. In spite of the extraordinary influence possessed by the Presbyterian ministry, the Scotch, both as individuals and a nation, were loyal, and have always been attached to the monarchy. They had framed their famous Covenant to defend their religion, attacked as they believed by Charles's attachment to an Episcopal form of Church government; but in spite of those Covenants, for which so much blood had been shed, one feeling pervaded Scotland when the fell deed was done,—and that was, horror and dismay!

They forgot how they had joined in the cry, 'To the rock with him! To the rock with him!' and only remembered he was their anointed King, descendant of their own Scottish monarchy. They loudly protested against his death, and forced Argyle (who has been accused of agreeing beforehand to the execution) to proclaim Prince Charles as King, and his father's successor. Argyle, it is true, endeavoured to please all parties in Scotland, by an-

nouncing that the only condition on which Prince Charles could ascend the throne was his becoming Presbyterian in religion and Covenanting in politics ; but he knew that there was a strong party against the Government he had established, and dared not openly defy it.

So strongly was popular indignation aroused and excited, that probably the restoration of Prince Charles would have promptly followed had Argyle been sincere, and had not the fanatic clergy of Scotland exercised an arbitrary and usurping power under the mask of religion.

The Presbyterian clergy laid claim to a voice, not only in religious but in every state matter ; and although many earnest and pious men had first promoted the civil wars in Scotland, the ministers of the Kirk were in many cases fanatics, who stopped at no means to effect their ends. The penalty attached to a refusal to swear to the Covenant was death, or a complete renunciation of all civil rights. The movement, which had commenced from a wish to purify their faith, had become so great a tyranny, that it was enough to designate a man as a 'plotter' or 'malignant' to draw down upon him the dread sentence of excommunication.

The Scottish people had for the time become a nation of fanatics. They looked upon any amuse-

ment, however innocent, as sinful, and were completely swayed by the clergy in every action of their lives. Argyle devoted himself to the religious party of Scotland, and proscribed all who disagreed with him. Forced to recognise Charles the Second by the popular feeling of the day, he made the Prince's acceptance of the crown almost impossible by the hard conditions he persuaded the General Assembly to attach to the offer.

The very day that Argyle, yielding to popular feeling, despatched a body of Commissioners to the Hague, he executed the Marquis of Huntly, who had suffered a long imprisonment. That act alone should have shown Prince Charles how little Argyle had really his restoration at heart ; for Huntly was the representative of one of the noblest families in the Highlands, and, in spite of his antipathy to Montrose, had been ever devoted to the house of Stuart.

Montrose, after joining Prince Charles at the Hague, had reason to be fully satisfied with the confidence his new sovereign bestowed on his father's firmest champion.

Charles—whom we may now call Charles the Second—gave him his royal commission to act as his Lieutenant or Governor in Scotland, made him General of all his forces by sea and land, besides

giving him letters accrediting him as his Envoy to the German, Danish, and other foreign Courts supposed to be likely to help the royal exile to mount his throne.

Montrose urged Charles to lose no time in invading Scotland. He himself offered to raise a small body of Royalists, and by a spirited effort regain the kingdom for Charles. By the time the Commissioners arrived at the Hague, and with solemn mien, slow pace, and an affectation of superior sanctity, unfolded their proposals to the King, our hero had been a long time near his sovereign. Had Charles been entirely influenced by Montrose, he would have placed no faith in the specious nature of the arguments used by those about him to weaken Montrose's influence and thwart his schemes.

Among their number were the Earls of Lanerick and Lauderdale, who, unhappily for the royal cause, had joined the Court at the Hague, and advised the King on a totally different course to that proposed by Montrose.

While Montrose urged immediate action, Charles's presence in Scotland, and no treaty of any kind with Argyle and his party; Lanerick advised delay and conciliation, and an alliance with the dominant government of the northern kingdom.

The King's own feelings prompted him to confide fully in the Marquis of Montrose; and when the Scotch Commissioners had unfolded their proposals, he treated him with all the more respect and consideration that the Committee of Estates had, in a letter to Charles, violently attacked him, and demanded his instant expulsion from Court, as one who had been excommunicated by the Kirk of Scotland, and thereby 'delivered into the hands of the devil!'

The proposal of the Commissioners was comprised under three heads:—

Charles was to sign both Covenants; to promise faithfully to maintain the Presbyterian form of religion in Scotland, as well as to favour its extension to England as soon as he should be firmly established on his throne.

Secondly, he was to give up all his own friends, and be guided solely by Argyle and his party; and thirdly, he was to govern solely under the direction of Parliament and the General Assembly.

It was not reasonable to suppose that Charles would deem such conditions anything but contemptible; but they were vehemently advocated by several noblemen around him, including Lauderdale, Callander, and Lanerick—the latter now Duke of Hamilton, in consequence of his brother's death.

The Marquis of Montrose was among those who would fain have urged the King to decline any proposals from the General Assembly. He pointed out the evidence of the insincerity with which such overtures were made, instancing the execution of Huntly, and the marked way in which, when speaking of the King's execution, they avoided calling it regicide. Charles leant strongly to our hero's views; and when Hamilton and Lauderdale, in their eagerness to back up such exorbitant demands, went so far as to denounce Montrose as 'that traitor,' only treated him with the more respect.

The Earl of Lauderdale violently attacking Montrose one day at Court, a nobleman present inquired 'what offence the Marquis had committed.' In reply, Lauderdale accused him of great cruelty and inhumanity, and alleged that he had always refused quarter, and completely ruined whole clans and families; adding, 'his behaviour had been so savage that Scotland would never forgive him!'

The King begged all his Scottish nobles to advise him on so weighty a matter; but Hamilton and Lauderdale refused to meet our hero in council. Probably they dreaded the eloquence and talent of Montrose, in a right cause, telling against them.

Montrose then put his advice on paper, and while urging the King to proceed to Scotland, again offered

to head a movement in that kingdom in favour of the monarchy.

Charles, however, adopted a middle course. He kept the Commissioners in play, and did not entirely decline Montrose's services. He left the Hague and went back to France, under pretext of consulting Queen Henrietta Maria, who was still resident at the French King's Court.

Although the Commissioners pretended great indignation at Charles's rejection of their hypocritical offers, they were secretly rejoiced that, instead of adopting Montrose's advice, and returning to Scotland, he had gone to France; for they knew that a large party were only waiting for their sovereign's presence to proclaim him king over his ancient kingdom of Scotland.

Montrose had every reason to maintain his own opinion that Scotland was ripe for a new enterprise in Charles's favour; but the King, doubtful whether the enterprise would succeed, gave him no written authority for a second attempt till he had first consulted his mother. The Marquis, meanwhile, fully empowered by Charles, visited several foreign Courts to solicit, in the King's name, aid and assistance.

He met with a great deal of sympathy from several of the princes of Germany, and a favourable hearing from the Emperor himself. Wherever he

went he was received with respect ; for while his countrymen—at least such as were Cavaliers—declared Montrose to be the only one of the King's generals they could trust, his military fame was fully recognised at all foreign Courts.

The King of Denmark and the Queen of Sweden both promised aid ; and he found that on the Continent universal sympathy was felt for the King,—the cruel execution of Charles the First having aroused feelings of indignation throughout Europe. At length Montrose received the King's written sanction to a descent on Scotland. This was about the middle of September 1649. Urged by the impatience of the Scottish Cavaliers to see their leader once more among them, Montrose sent a portion of his forces to the Orkney Isles, which he selected as the safest place of meeting.

An insurrection in favour of the King had already taken place in Scotland, set on foot by Lord Seaforth's brother, Mr. Thomas Mackenzie. The movement had been largely augmented by several Scottish nobles and gentry, who had escaped out of England ; and who, finding their houses and lands seized and sequestered, were burning for revenge.

Argyle, with a view to preventing any further insurrection, had organized an army of between three and four thousand troops, whom he placed under

General Leslie and other Presbyterian leaders ; but Mackenzie had defied him, wresting Inverness from its garrison ; and, at the head of a large body of Northern Cavaliers and several Lowlanders, had advanced beyond the River Spey.

The Queen of Sweden promised Montrose arms, and the Duke of Holstein offered five large ships and about seven or eight hundred men. He received urgent letters from the Scottish Cavaliers, as well as a deputation from Orkney, entreating him not to wait for his own forces, but to join them in Scotland, where the very sight of his face, they urged, was sufficient to rally twenty thousand men to his standard. In Ireland, the Marquis of Ormond had taken up arms against the Puritans, and the English Loyalists were ready to join Montrose, so disgusted were they at the proposals made to, and partly accepted by, the King from the Scottish Commissioners.

Montrose had reaped the fruits of his enthusiastic love of glory in his first campaign. No wonder, then, that, urged to immediate action from Scotland, and dreading that, as soon as the King had signed the treaty with the Scottish Commissioners, he would withdraw his secret instructions to Montrose to proceed with the expedition, our hero issued a declaration, in which he accused the Covenanters of

‘having betrayed and sold their King.’ It was dated from Sweden. Charles was then at Jersey, on the point of meeting the Scottish Commissioners in Holland, with a view to accepting their terms and signing the treaty; and though he was about to take a step that would put a complete stop to Montrose’s expedition, he continued to write, urging him to expedition, and sending him a present of the George and Riband of the Order of the Garter, which fact refutes the charge against our hero, that he acted totally in opposition to the King’s commands.

The Earl of Morton had agreed to allow Montrose’s troops to land in the Orkney Islands; but the first supply of men despatched thither had mostly perished by shipwreck. Two hundred alone, out of twelve hundred sent off from Gottenburg, reached Scotland.

The Earl of Morton, however, and several of the leading gentry of that part of Scotland, joined the gallant remnant, and under that nobleman immediately took a strong castle called Birsay.

Unfortunately, an altercation took place between the Earl of Morton and the Earl of Kinnoul as to which of them should command those troops, which ended in the discomfiture of the former. This so deeply affected him, that soon afterwards he died of mortification and annoyance.

While all Scotland was ringing with our hero's declaration, and the Presbyterian clergymen denouncing its author as that 'traitor James Graham!' Montrose, misled by the too sanguine views of the Scottish Cavaliers, and his own enthusiasm, was on his road to Scotland to begin a second campaign ; and to consummate his vow !





CHAPTER VII.

‘I charge thee, boy, if ere thou meet
With one of Assynt’s name,
Be it upon the mountain’s side,
Or yet within the glen ;
Stand he in martial gear alone,
Or backed by arméd men,
Face him, as thou wouldst face the man
Who wronged thy sire’s renown ;
Remember of what blood thou art,
And strike the caitiff down !’

—AYTOUN.

IN the same resolute and undaunted spirit as that in which Montrose had so reluctantly given up the first expedition, he set about the second.

Disregarding all the fears expressed by the more moderate members of the Cavalier party, and counting not the cost of the enterprise should it fail, Montrose set out upon the expedition. Confident of the justice of his cause, energetic and enthusiastic, no arguments as to its danger were likely to thwart

his designs. 'Nil medium,' the motto on his banner, is the keynote to his character. Love of glory was his passion, added to which he was superstitious enough to ascribe importance to an old legend in his family, predicting that he was to 'revenge the King's death, and by his sword become the greatest subject in the land.'

Montrose at this time was a middle-aged man. The illusions of youth had vanished, but not its generous impulses. He retained to the last the enthusiasm of youth. He is described as middle-sized, but with great physical strength, well-proportioned limbs, and regular features.

His hair was of a rich dark chestnut, his nose aquiline, and his complexion sanguine. It was his eyes, however, that impressed all beholders, for they were quick and penetrating. They told of his high soul and undaunted spirit, of his generous heart and purity of life, in an age distinguished by its immorality; and while those dark grey orbs struck terror into an enemy's heart, their fierce glance would soften when he gazed on the face of a friend. 'Montrose,' as an old writer says, was 'exceeding constant to those that did adhere to him, and to those he knew, very affable.

His manners matched his face and figure. They were courtly, though perhaps a little stately; while

his habitual gravity—for he is said to have rarely smiled after his sovereign's martyrdom—made strangers believe him very proud.

Even his enemies, while attempting to blacken a character which history has since vindicated, never denied his talents. To energy of character was added a clear, far-seeing judgment; and where others had hesitated and paused for reflection, Montrose, seeing with a glance what was the best course to take, was prompt and decisive in action. This was the secret of his success. Such was the man who, with a handful of troops, chiefly foreigners, officered by Scotchmen, and barely five hundred in number, determined to invade Scotland.

Throughout Scotland the Whigs denounced him as 'that wicked and excommunicated traitor, James Graham!' and hastened to reply to his declaration by one of their own; while the Presbyterian clergy lost no time in warning their flocks to beware of that 'insolent braggart,' while secretly fearing the prowess and success of one whom they knew as no vainglorious foe.

Leslie was desired, as commander-in-chief, to quickly get together all available troops. It was no easy matter to do so as urgently as was needed, for the army was scattered all over the kingdom, and could not at a moment's notice be reassembled.

Before sailing for Scotland, Montrose had had a last interview with the Second Charles at the Hague, and was invested by him with the title of Lieutenant-Governor of Scotland, and had given him full sanction for the enterprise.

Montrose then made a tour through the Northern States of Europe, with a view to obtaining assistance from foreign princes ; for even he dared not undertake the invasion of a kingdom without money and arms.

The enthusiasm of Charles's ambassador, and the earnestness with which Montrose pleaded his master's cause, dwelling on the distracted state of his country, and the great crime the Republicans had committed in putting Charles to death, met with a generous response from the King of Denmark, the Queen of Sweden, and several lesser potentates. The King of Denmark gave him a large sum of money, the Queen of Sweden placed fifteen hundred stand of arms at his disposal, and the Duke of Holstein offered him five large ships and seven or eight hundred soldiers, which offers the Marquis joyfully accepted.

Other princes promised aid ; but when the time arrived when Montrose, depending on their promises, expected soldiers, money, and arms, they failed to keep their faith ; probably deterred from propping

up a falling cause after the first reverse of his arms.

Scotland was thoroughly subdued by Argyle's party, and the Independents had obtained complete ascendancy, although the Cavaliers—a numerous party—were beginning to rebel against the oppressions of that upstart faction, and had secretly assured Montrose that they were ready to support him as soon as he landed in Scotland.

The arrogance of the Presbyterians was indeed sufficient to disgust all moderate men. Not content with denouncing Episcopacy from the pulpit, they proscribed all who did not agree in their rigid religious views; and a system of persecution ensued, which was as great and oppressive as any hitherto endured in the annals of history. The upper classes in Scotland were generally Episcopalian; and the proscribed party included so many of the aristocracy, that the nobility were but scantily represented in the Scottish Parliament, and on one occasion, in 1649, only four 'lords' were among the barons and burgesses.

Argyle's spies were scattered over the kingdom, and any who dared to differ from the prevailing party were subjected to every species of persecution, and heavily fined if they resisted.

The Cavaliers therefore having placed all their

hopes on the King's restoration, readily promised Montrose their support; and the Duke of Ormond succeeding in Ireland, where he had taken up the royal cause, Montrose trusted that as soon as he landed he might possibly receive help from that quarter.

But the first beginning of his campaign proved disastrous. The ships and troops given him by his foreign friends were kept waiting a long time off Holland, owing to the neglect of Montrose's agent, Colonel Ogilvie, whom he had sent to Amsterdam to look after them; while another of his agents, one Colonel Cochran, whom he had employed to raise money in Poland, turned against him, and appropriated a large sum that had been contributed towards the expedition by Scotchmen in that country.

These vexatious circumstances, however, were capped by a far more serious misfortune. The Earl of Morton had promised to receive Montrose's first detachment of troops in Orkney, and accordingly twelve hundred foreign soldiers were shipped from Gottenburg in September 1649; but when they got off the dangerous Orkney coast, two of the ships were lost in a storm, with all their crews, as well as the greater part of the arms the Marquis had collected. In this way a thousand

soldiers perished out of the twelve hundred despatched from Germany. Two hundred only landed at Kirkwall, where the Earl of Morton at once joined them.

The Earl had been induced to take this course of action by a definite promise from Charles that he would, after his restoration, reward his services by the gift of some church lands in that part of Scotland.

The gentry were well affected to Charles's cause, and with their help Lord Morton took, after some resistance, a fortress called Birsay, and garrisoned it for Montrose.

Morton, however, had a quarrel with the Earl of Kinnoul, his own nephew, as to which of them should command the troops until the Marquis arrived ; the latter asserting that he had the sole right to do so, as Montrose had given him a commission to that effect.

The dispute between the two Earls had such an effect on Morton's mind, that, as already stated, he died broken-hearted. Kinnoul's death also took place before Montrose landed, so that from September to March 1650 but little progress was made in raising troops in the Orkney Islands, and Montrose found scarcely anything done, when at last he once more set foot on Scottish ground.

Orkney was undefended by the Parliamentary troops, and the gentry were loyal to the King ; but the Orcadians were unwarlike, undisciplined, and Montrose had no cavalry to protect such irregular troops.

The first act of the Marquis, when resolved on this expedition, had been to issue a proclamation, or defence of his reasons for invading Scotland. This document was circulated in Scotland before he landed, and had been answered, as we have seen, by a counter-declaration by the Whig party, in which they denounced Montrose in no measured language.

While the little vessel that was bearing Montrose and his gallant companions across the seas was tossing about, detained by contrary winds, threatened by storms, and yet safely bearing him to his destiny, how many a bitter thought must not that loyal-hearted Cavalier have given to Charles's weakness of character ! Educated under his mother's baleful influence, and hating the Covenanters, the Prince had not been, as our hero well knew, wholly true either to him or to his mission.

True it was that Charles had received Montrose warmly at the Hague, and had professed for him the greatest gratitude, while he ratified his former military commission, and gave him full powers to

levy money and troops in the royal cause both in Scotland and abroad; but while loading his father's staunch servant with honours, he was also in secret treaty with the Covenanters! Montrose therefore hoped to strike such a decisive blow as should ensure success to the royal cause, and deter the young King from listening to those whom he justly deemed his implacable foes.

It must have seemed indeed scarcely credible to Montrose that Charles could listen to the Scottish Commissioners, whose strict ideas of morality and doleful faces were by no means to the Prince's taste. But Charles had no steady principle. He thought to keep them in play till he saw how Montrose succeeded. The Scotch professed to be willing to declare him Scotland's only rightful king, but that act was only to take place should he promise strict obedience to the Covenant, and to new obligations and oaths framed according to their own sectarian views.

The Commissioners who had been sent to the Hague were all Republicans; and though forced, by the turn matters had taken, to recognise Charles, were anxious to do so only in such a manner as would cripple his prerogative as king, and banish from his Court all those who had looked on Charles the First's execution as regicide. Their hatred

was principally levelled against Montrose, whose determination and bravery they knew would be exerted to avenge the King's death, and even Argyle and all who had consented to it.

Montrose's acute mind saw all the dangers that vacillation in Charles would produce; and as he stepped ashore, in the month of March 1650, it was with a burning desire to frustrate the secret plots and treaties into which he feared the King might be induced to enter, unless he could be beforehand with the Covenanters.

If Montrose had needed any proof of the distrust and aversion he felt towards the party then treating with Charles, he must have found it in the execution of the gallant Marquis of Huntly, who, for no crime except that Argyle hated and feared him as a rival, had been beheaded the very day on which the Commissioners had been despatched to Holland to treat with Charles. The Marquis of Huntly had been Montrose's rival in the earlier times of the Covenant, and it is said that Huntly never forgave his conduct in those days when our hero was a Covenanter.

Had it not been for that early difference, two such loyal and staunch Cavaliers must have been firm friends. Huntly's character was as gallant and noble as that of Montrose. He was one of the

most powerful chieftains in the Highlands. He was head of the Gordons,—that brave clan, whose badge, a spray of ivy, was a fit emblem of fidelity,—and his high rank and great possessions made him formidable as a foe and powerful as a friend.

The Marquis and his followers—‘stout men and true, who for King Charles wore blue’—were the last who laid down arms for the royal cause, after the King’s imprisonment by the English Republicans. At last, however, the Presbyterian army took Huntly prisoner, and—as already mentioned—he was thrown into the common jail in Edinburgh; and the very day that the Scottish Commissioners sailed on their mission to the young King, that gallant nobleman was executed.

Montrose had sailed from Gottenburg in December, and it was March, 1650, when, accompanied by his natural brother, Sir Harry Graham, his old adversary and now warm friend Sir John Hurry, Viscount Frendraught, and five other loyal Cavaliers of note and distinction, he arrived in Orkney. The perilous voyage and shipwreck that the first party met with reduced Montrose’s forces to five hundred foreign soldiers, and these were reinforced by two hundred more, under the command of Lord Kinnoul, who had garrisoned Birsay Castle.

Montrose must have felt bitterly mortified to find how small a number of soldiers he could muster round his black flag, then the royal standard, as emblematical of the Marquis's desire for vengeance. It bore ghastly inscriptions, with a device of three hands clasped in a cloud, from the centre of which branched out three naked arms and hands grasping bare swords, intended to designate the kingdoms of England, Scotland, and Ireland; while on it was this passage from the 43d Psalm, in capital letters:

'Judge and avenge my cause, O Lord.'

The flag borne by the foot soldiers was also black, and had painted on it a picture of the late King's head, from which blood was represented as dripping. On that standard, these Latin words were displayed:

'Deo et hic tricibus armis.'

On the Marquis's own banner of white damask was the Scottish lion rampant on the top of a rock, through a cleft of which ran a gory stream, with the embroidered motto, 'Nil medium.'

The natural position of Orkney prevented the Presbyterians from attempting to attack Montrose as long as he remained there.

The Whigs had publicly burned his declaration the month before, at the Cross of Edinburgh,

denouncing him, by the mouths of their active partisans, the Presbyterian clergy, in such terms as these—

‘That bloody cut-throat, truculent tyrant, and excommunicated traitor, James Graham ;’ or, ‘the perjured Covenanter, with his Hieland limmers and vipers, the limbs of Satan and brood of hell !’

But hard words hurt not, and for the three weeks of his stay in Orkney, Montrose was safe from his enemies.

The gentlemen of those parts were all loyal and devoted to the King’s cause ; and with the assistance that they rendered him as soon as he unfurled his sombre standard, he was able to muster eight hundred Islanders among his forces. Though by those means his little army amounted in round numbers to fifteen hundred men, the Orcadians were so unwarlike in their habits,—being principally fishermen and farmers,—that for all practical purposes he could only rely on his foreign troops.

His devoted follower Allaster MacColkeitoch was all this time fighting against Cromwell’s soldiers in Ireland, and with him were Glengarry and MacDonald of Clanranald, who, had they been in Scotland, would have rallied to his side ; so that Montrose found himself at the head of a very different army from that to which he had been accustomed,

when at the sign of the Fiery Cross each resolute Redshank had 'followed his chief to the field.'

Thus the second campaign began with every element of failure in its composition. Yet, with his usual enthusiasm, Montrose still hoped for victory, although to any one less sanguine, victory from the first seemed hopeless.

It was chiefly the peasantry of Pomona whom Montrose enlisted during his three weeks' residence in the Orkney Isles.

The Islesmen of those out-of-the-way parts were ignorant and uncivilised. They had probably never seen a buff coat or handled firearms before Montrose bid them enlist for their King, determined to raise an army, however rough might be the men composing it.

The Orcadians were at that time grossly superstitious. They believed in the curious old folks' stories about witchcraft and the powers of Satan; and here too, in common with their neighbours in the Hebrides, they commonly believed that all drowned persons became seals. There is a legend in accordance with this superstition, about a Highland chief, named Macphee of Colonsay, which is worth quoting.

This Highland chief was standing one day by the sea-shore, when he descried on a lonely rock a lovely maiden combing out her yellow locks.

The chief was so struck with her beauty, that he determined to catch her. He unmoored his boat and rowed swiftly forward, taking care that she did not see him. Arrived at the rock, where he found a seal's skin, which proved that she was a mermaid, he seized it, and so prevented the lovely maiden from again transforming herself into a seal. Instead of restoring her mantle, however, he gave her his plaid, wrapped up in which he rowed her to land, and bore his prize safely home to his castle on the island.

Then, again, the Islanders were accustomed to exercise their fishing boats before starting on a cruise. This was done in the early morning, by filling the tapholes with water. Then, as the sun was rising, the fishermen would pull out to sea, and burning a waxen figure in the boat's centre, and crying, 'Satan, avaunt,' felt that the evil spirit was chased away, and that they might safely embark for the trip!

Others, if the wind rose and the waves tossed high, would try and propitiate the elements by dashing water on a famous blue stone kept on the altar of the shrine of St. Columba, or by throwing money into a church built in honour of St. Ronald.

Such ignorant and undisciplined fishermen were ill calculated to replace the ardent and resolute

Redshanks, who had fought so bravely in Montrose's first campaign.

When the Marquis had enlisted as many as he could, his next measure was to get the means of transporting them across the Pentland Frith.

He therefore laid forcible hands on some old fishing smacks, and embarked his soldiers at a place called Holm Sound, a bay in Pomona, and sailing safely across landed them at John O'Groat's House, a place in Caithness. The Marquis had the satisfaction of feeling that he had not lost a single man on the passage.

The Cavaliers had been over sanguine about their reception on the mainland. Montrose had hoped to enlist in Sutherland, Ross, and Caithness at least three large regiments; but the peasantry had been tutored from the pulpits of the Kirk to consider 'James Graham' a cruel and devastating foe, and a general exodus took place when news arrived of his vicinity. Some, rather than remain to meet him, escaped and made their way to Edinburgh, three hundred miles away.

Montrose acted with his usual energy. He proclaimed the King, unfurled his black flag, and bid all swear allegiance to the throne; but in one instance, a Presbyterian clergyman preferred martyrdom to compliance.

‘What! swear allegiance to one whose first act would be to restore Episcopacy! rather would he die!’ So Montrose sent him in fetters on board one of his ships to repent his imprudence at leisure. One cannot but respect the minister for his consistency.

In the meantime, the Whigs were making active preparations to meet Montrose. While Leslie was ordered to collect all available troops at Brechin, a skilful soldier and Covenanter was despatched northwards, at the head of two hundred men, to help the Earl of Sutherland, who was then busy in raising soldiers to oppose the Cavalier army. Strachan was rapidly followed by Leslie with three thousand foot soldiers, marching thirty miles a day—so eager was their leader to meet Montrose.

The Marquis felt deeply mortified to see how prejudiced his countrymen were against him; but he knew that there was also a large and distinguished number of Highlanders ready to rise and help him, and he daily hoped to see them reach his camp.

Alas! his hope was never realized. He knew not the failure of that rising which, headed by the Earl of Seaforth, had by that time been crushed by the implacable Covenanters under Colonel Strachan,—the very same soldier now marching onwards to meet him.

A little body of gallant Highlanders, owning no sympathy with the sour-faced Presbyterians, had eagerly waited Montrose's arrival.

They had been too eager, as the issue showed. On marched their gallant band under Mackenzies, with historic names ; for the Lairds of Pluscardine, Redcastle, Lakehouse, and Pennicke were all there, with the brave clan Macpherson ; and they reached Inverness unmolested after crossing the River Spey.

Their arrival, two thousand strong, took the garrison by surprise, and the castle soon fell into their hands. After demolishing that ancient edifice, and carrying all before them through Morayland, they encountered at Baldenie a large body of Lowland cavalry, headed by the Whig Colonels Halket, Kerr, and Strachan.

Not all the gallantry of men descended from intrepid Gaelic ancestors could avail. They fought as befitted those who wore badges of holly and box-wood ; but eighty warriors fell to rise no more, and eight hundred were taken prisoners, and with them all their chieftains.

The defeat of this enterprise emboldened the Covenanters ; but while Strachan and his comrades were putting down what is called 'Pluscardine's raid,' Montrose day by day hoped to see the Highlanders who had failed in that enterprise join him

in Sutherlandshire. The Earl of Sutherland was a Covenanter, and a great and powerful chieftain.

He felt naturally alarmed lest Montrose should attack his castles of Dunrobin, Skibo, Skelbo, and Dornoch ; and the 'Morar Chattu' hastened to place garrisons into those seats. Montrose, however, did not attempt to attack them, but passed them by without firing a shot, warning the Earl, nevertheless, that he should not continue to be so forbearing, and that some of his Cavalier neighbours would lay waste his lands should he remain hostile to the royal cause.

Little heeded by the Earl of Sutherland were those threats, for he knew that four thousand Lowlanders were on their way to meet the Cavaliers, and were actually at Tain, twenty miles off ; while Montrose's little band, weakened by desertion, scarcely numbered twelve hundred.

All this time, not knowing that Seaforth's rising had failed, Montrose counted on the aid of Pluscardine's followers ; but hearing and seeing nothing of them, he thought it more prudent to halt before descending further on the Lowlands.

He therefore encamped at the top of the Frith of Dornoch, in a valley called Stratheckle, near the junction of Ross and Sutherlandshire. This was

six days after the Cavaliers had entered the Earl's county.

Being a good general, he had endeavoured to secure the means of retreat should the necessity for it arise. With that object he had divided his little army into two columns. One column he despatched southwards to secure the Castle of Dunbeath, which belonged to Sir John Sinclair.

Sir John was absent, but Lady Sinclair had placed herself at the head of the garrison left to defend it. With bugles sounding the Cavaliers approached Dunbeath, and Lady Sinclair, in her husband's absence, determined to make no resistance.

Sir John Hurry, who knew its natural advantages for defence, was agreeably surprised to find Lady Sinclair disposed to make none; and in return for her ready compliance, made honourable terms with her, and allowed the dame to leave it unharmed, accompanied by all her servants.

Well might the Cavaliers have wished to take Dunbeath; for, built on a high rock, at the foot of which dashed the ocean, a drawbridge alone connected it with the mainland, and that, when drawn up, made it almost impregnable.

Montrose's brother, Harry Graham, was left in command of it, with a garrison of a few men. Sir John Hurry then rejoined the Marquis.

All this time the enemies of Montrose had been planning his destruction. The Earl of Sutherland, who knew the country thoroughly well, had advised with the Covenanting generals on the best course to pursue. They agreed to surround him on all sides, and make retreat impossible.

Had Montrose been able to communicate with his friends, he would have heard of the large army hurrying up to attack him; but Sutherland had shut off all passages for receiving intelligence, and Montrose's Orcadians and foreign soldiers made bad scouts, owing to their ignorance of the country.

After securing, as he believed, a retreat to Dunbeath, Montrose's next step was to get possession of the Hill of Ord. He therefore sent five hundred men to seize it. That huge mountain of granite, twelve hundred feet high, formed a pass from the county of Sutherland into that of Ross. It was so narrow that only three men could ride abreast along it. The 'Morar Chattu' knew its importance, and tried to reach it before him, but he retired without disputing the passage with the Royalists.

This had taken place before Montrose himself passed over the Ord into Sutherlandshire; and as soon as the Covenanters found he had done so, the Earl of Sutherland, by taking a southern route, cut off his retreat, while it was agreed that Strachan

should attack him in the front, at the head of the Munroes and men of Ross, Leslie's men bringing up the rear.

Meanwhile, halting at Stratheckle, and ignorant of the vicinity of Strachan's troops,—for the 'Morar Chattu's' gillies had watched the Cavaliers so narrowly that no communication from their friends had been suffered to reach them, nor yet any tidings of the Lowlanders' approach,—the little band awaited its doom.

Each hour Montrose hoped for the advent of those true and loyal Mackenzies under Seaforth and Pluscardine, while all that time some lay slain, and some were in prison, mourning their ruined hopes, and reaping the reward accorded by the Covenanters to their loyalty and valour.

The Covenanters, under experienced generals, were within twenty miles of Montrose, and marching towards his camp, before he became aware of even their vicinity.

The day, Saturday the 27th of April 1650, was memorable. To the Orcadians among the Cavaliers it must have been an ill omen that the battle should fall on that day of the week. They believed it to be 'uncanny' to begin anything important on that day. They would not marry on Saturdays, nor in the month of May, both times being considered unlucky.

The Covenanters, who very properly respected the keeping of Sunday, hesitated about fighting, for fear that the battle might not be ended on the 'Lord's day ;' but at length it was decided to wait no longer for an encounter that Montrose himself had advanced to begin.

The Cavaliers having at length become aware of the enemy's presence, Montrose sent off a body of infantry to reconnoitre.

The Covenanters finding that Montrose had taken that step, and after breaking up his camp at Strath-eckle advanced two miles nearer to Carbisdale, determined by a ruse to mislead Montrose into the belief that his adversary's forces were but a few in number. The Covenanters knelt down in the soft deep broom that grew so luxuriantly in those parts, and therefore Montrose's scouts only discovered a few horsemen.

They hurried back to Montrose, who, thus misled, believed that he had only to contend with Strachan's forlorn hope, and therefore calmly awaited their approach on a low piece of ground near a river called the Kyle. But soon he heard another tale ; for in the distance he perceives advancing squadron after squadron. Strachan's army was artfully disposed, and looked more numerous than it really was.

Strachan led the advanced guard of a hundred

horsemen himself; then followed another column of about eighty men under Colonel Halket; the third Captain Hutchinson commanded; and the rear, composed of all foot soldiers, was officered by the Quartermaster Shaw. Montrose's little force of foreign soldiers, Orcadian peasantry, and a few Highlanders, were marshalled at the foot of a hill called in Gaelic 'Craigcaoin Eadhan,'—'The Rock of Lamentation,'—which name it has held even to our own day.

The fact that Montrose had no cavalry made the combat more than ever unequal. He and a few officers of his staff alone were mounted. He entrusted the King's black standard to a gallant young Cavalier, Gilbert Menzies of Pitfoddels, who defended it to the last.

The Covenanters paused before beginning the conflict, to sing psalms and read passages from Scripture, calling on God to defend their cause in battle, as in olden times He had befriended the children of Israel.

Placing his hand on the standard of the Covenant, the Puritan leader stood opposite Montrose's little force, and pointing them out to his soldiers, cried, 'Behold yonder men! They are not only our enemies, but those of the Lord Jesus Christ. This last night, I have been dealing with the Almighty

God, to know the result of this affair, and I have gotten it ; for as sure as He is in heaven, they are delivered into our hands, and not a man of us shall fall to the ground.'

As he finished this presumptuous and blasphemous speech, Strachan led his men on to battle ; but he first of all rode forward alone, at the head of his 'forlorn hope,' and desired the infantry to crouch down among the broom and heather in order to deceive Montrose as to his numbers.

The great Marquis, who no doubt had offered up a silent prayer for success, remained stationary, till he saw in the distance a long line of Covenanters behind Strachan's horse. The Marquis strains his sight again, and needs no other glance to show him Halket's lancers, and Hutchinson's cuirassiers, with their steel caps, gorgets, and breast-plates, their weapons being lances, swords, and pistols, all glittering in the sunlight of an April day ; and behind them the musqueteers and the Sutherland men. He sees that he is caught by stratagem, and fears that all Leslie's men are behind this advanced guard.

The musqueteers spring up from the heather, and carrying their weapons pointed towards the Cavaliers, advance in steady order. Montrose gives

hurried commands to his men to retreat to the hill behind them.

It was steep and craggy, but sheltered by a wood. If they gain it, thinks their leader, they may defy the Covenanters. The lancers, dragoons, and cuirassiers will be powerless if the Cavaliers can but reach the hill in good order before Strachan is upon them. Their retreat, however, became disorderly in the extreme. The Orcadians, seeing their dangerous position, ran rather than marched, and Montrose finds his enemy's horse among his buff-coats before they could reach the rocks.

The Islanders scarcely made any resistance. Most of them threw down their arms, and begged for quarter. Oh for the Redshanks of old! They would have fought to the last, and as valiantly as did Montrose, Hurry, Menzies of Pitfoddels, Powrie, Ogilvie, and all the brave Cavaliers on that fatal day. Alas! the day was all too quickly lost; and ere the sun began to set, the star of the great Marquis, Scotland's greatest hero, sank to rise no more.

The Dutch soldiers behaved admirably; and after managing to get into the shelter of some trees, for a long time kept the enemy's horse at bay, till at length, overcome by superior numbers, they were forced to surrender.

The Orkney men made no such resistance, but

fled like a flock of sheep, and were driven into the river, where two hundred were drowned, while several were made prisoners.

Montrose fought like a hero till the last. His rich Cavalier dress, his plumed hat, and above all the diamond Star and Ribbon of the Garter, made him a conspicuous figure in that fearful scene of blood and carnage. Yet, though fighting in the foremost ranks, the bullets failed to reach him ; and even after his horse was killed under him, he fought on, while young Menzies, bearing the King's standard, strove to encourage the men. Twenty times, some say thirty, that brave fellow, refusing quarter, defended the standard entrusted to him by Montrose, till a bullet struck him through the heart, and with a smile on his face he fell to the ground, his right hand, even in death, still grasping the precious charge. Not till twelve of his bravest officers had been killed by his side, and he himself had been badly wounded, would Montrose confess to failure. Then he was dragged off the field by his faithful friend James Crichton, Viscount Frendraught. Perceiving that his army were all routed, drowned, or prisoners, Montrose determined to save his life by flight. He had sought death among his soldiers, but found it not. He had no horse ; and Lord Frendraught urged him to use his. When Montrose

remonstrated with him, he begged him to mount without a moment's delay.

'What matters *my* life?' exclaimed this noble Scotchman, assisting Montrose into the saddle.

'Save yourself, for the sake of the King's good cause!'

Lord Kinnoul, Sir Edward Sinclair, Major Sinclair of Brim, and a few others, fighting their way off the field of battle, then escaped.

It was about six o'clock in the evening when, with their general's flight, the battle ended.

A short hour's bloody work, and all Montrose's hopes were ruined. The carnage went on yet for a little while, as the Covenanters pursued their foe, and made the greater number prisoners. Nearly four hundred were killed, including twelve officers who fell by their general's side; and it is said that so many Orcadians fell by that 'Rock of Lamentation,' that there was hardly a family in those islands who did not lose a relative that bloody day.

Strachan himself escaped unwounded, owing to the thickness of his buff coat; two only of the Covenanters were killed, and one was drowned.

The generous Frendraught, nephew to the Earl of Sutherland, having no horse, was wounded and soon made prisoner. Lord Sutherland sent him to Dunrobin Castle, to be cured of his wounds; but Hurry

and the other officers, among whom were both Scottish noblemen and Cavaliers of noble family, with several Dutch and Swedish officers, were sent off to Edinburgh, where they were imprisoned for a time, many being ultimately exiled or executed.

When the Covenanters seized the King's standards, and among them the black flag, bearing an effigy on it of their martyred sovereign's gory head, their exultation knew no bounds. Collecting together those gallant and unfortunate gentlemen and men who had fallen into their hands as prisoners, they prepared to return to the Covenanters' headquarters at Tain, fourteen miles off. What must not the Cavaliers have felt, as they heard their captors return thanks to God for their victory ! Doubtless, even in the midst of their own misery, they groaned in spirit at the prospect of what Montrose's own sad fate would be !

The Sutherland men pursued the stragglers, and for the few following days slaughtered all whom they captured ; but Strachan's men marched back at once to Tain.

The Parliament considered that Strachan had effectually quelled what they termed the rebellion, and publicly thanked him for his services, giving him £1000, and a valuable gold chain and diamond clasp as a reward for such great deeds. One triumph

only was needed. In spite of the long line of noble prisoners whom Strachan sent to Edinburgh, Argyle's hatred and thirst for blood remained unquenched as long as the hills and wilds of Scotland sheltered the great but hapless Montrose.

Who that reads this old but ever romantic tale will not understand the bitterness that filled the hero's breast, as, faint from his wounds, his rich clothes torn and soiled, his heart broken, he rides off the field, followed by his few remaining companions? To Montrose that terrible word *failure* meant the ruin of all his hopes of glory, the loss of King Charles's cause, the captivity and death of friends, and his own peril; for well he knew the Covenanters would never rest till he was taken!

Silent, despairing, almost aimless, the little party had halted, after an hour's hard riding put them for the moment beyond the reach of their enemy. A brief conference ends with a mutual agreement that it is best to part. There is no chance of safety for Montrose as long as so many keep together.

The farewell, spoken in the gloaming—for it was about seven o'clock in the evening—must have been indeed a sad one. Hands are clasped that would never meet again. As the great Montrose rides slowly off with Kinnoul and Sinclair as his only

companions, his friends feel that their parting is their last on earth.

After wandering about along the river-side till nearly midnight, Montrose threw off his velvet cloak, his diamond star, and sword. The wanderers met a Highlander among the straths and glades of the lonely country. The rustic stared with amazement when Montrose proposed an exchange of clothes; but he consented, and the exchange was made, the Marquis going forward in the guise of a simple Highlander.

He and Lord Kinnoul wandered about all that miserable night, till the latter dropped down from sheer exhaustion, and is supposed to have perished of hunger, leaving only Major Sinclair with Montrose.

Montrose and his remaining companion thought to wander on towards Caithness, and make their way to Dunbeath, in which castle his brother Harry Graham still maintained his ground at the head of a hundred men. Had he been able to reach Dunbeath in safety, he could then have escaped by Orkney over to France; but he knew nothing of the wild and desolate locality; and while he trudged on, hoping and believing that he was nearing friends, he was in reality getting more and more into the hands of his enemies.

Added to grief and sorrow, the gallant Montrose endured, as night drew on, all the pangs of hunger and thirst. It was perilous to demand rest and shelter at any of the solitary huts along the way ; but as morning broke on the second day, he ventured to beg a poor Highland woman to give him a little milk. Touched with his miserable plight, and merely supposing the wounded man to be some poor fugitive from Invercarron, she gave him some bread and milk, the first food (except wild berries) that this once great Marquis had tasted for two nights and a day !

Renovated and grateful, his indomitable courage returned. 'Despair,' he mused, 'is for cowards ! One effort more, and I shall be at Dunbeath !'

At last, after another long day of hunger, in which he was fain to make a sorry meal of his leathern gloves, Montrose discovered that, instead of being near Dunbeath, his wanderings had been merely in a circle. He then determined to throw himself upon the mercy of Neil Macleod, Baron of Assynt, who had once followed the royal banner, although he was now a staunch Covenanter.

Leslie, however, was far too wary to neglect the chance of securing Montrose's person. His enemies had guessed his intention of trying to reach the coast ; and as soon as Colonel Strachan had com-

municated to Leslie the news of the victory at Invercarron, that wily leader had sent off to the Laird of Assynt, and bid him arrest every stranger in the country, rather than that Montrose should escape.

The Baron of Assynt was only too ready to secure the large sum the Parliament offered for Montrose's head, and he himself led an armed band of vassals through every wood and valley in which they fancied the Cavaliers might be concealed.

Other armed parties were despatched in various directions, with orders to seize and bring in the Marquis to their master, dead or alive. One of the Laird's parties discovered Montrose at last, just as he and his single companion felt that they were sinking of starvation.

At first, the Highland gillies who found Montrose scarcely believed that the half-starved, ragged, and miserable object before them was the great and glorious Montrose; but all doubt was dispelled when they led him and his companion to their chief.

Montrose's wan face lighted up with a gleam of hope when he found that his captor was Macleod of Assynt. He did not for one moment believe that his former comrade would betray him; and the two Cavaliers joyfully hoped that they had at last found a friend and shelter.

They were soon cruelly undeceived. Assynt, in spite of the name he bore and the tartan that covered his breast, proved traitor in very deed. No considerations of friendship, no remembrances of past times, when they had both followed the same banner and fought for the same cause, moved the stern chief to pity.

‘Kill me now,’ pleaded the gallant Montrose, ‘rather than deliver me up into Leslie’s hands!’ But no. Assynt’s base soul longed for the reward, and he would listen to no entreaties, but hardened his heart against a sight that might well have melted even an enemy’s breast ; for nothing could be more piteous than to see the courtly Montrose, who had so often gloriously led his army to victory, reduced to demand death from the wretched Macleod, rather than be led a captive to Leslie.

There is a dreary tower, whose sides are washed by a dark loch called Assynt, and Macleod shut up the prisoners in that fortress of Ardvraich, till he had sent Leslie word that the prize was secured.

The memory of this wretch was odious in the Highlands for many generations, for hateful to the Celtic race are treachery and inhospitality. After Charles the Second’s restoration in 1674, Macleod was tried at Edinburgh for the part that he took on this occasion, and only narrowly escaped death.

It is pleasing to remember that the money reward he had calculated on receiving was never his, and that all this wretch ever got (in spite of the Scottish Parliament voting him 'twenty-five thousand pounds Scots') was '400 bolls of damaged meal,' while his name has been as much execrated as that of the Campbells of Glenlyon about the massacre of Glencoe. Ruin fell on his race ; for the Mackenzies, Mackays, and Macdonnells of Glengarry burst into Assynt as soon as they dared, and laid his land desolate with fire and sword. But let us not name him again, for he met with his deserts ; and treachery, even in this world, is always and surely punished.

General Leslie lost no time in sending to Ardvraich in answer to Assynt's message. When Montrose saw the Covenanters arrive, he knew that the bitterness of death was indeed begun. He needed no warning to tell him that the hatred of his enemies would only be slacked when his blood should have flowed on the block.

Happy had he been to have met death then and there ; but the victim was to be conveyed in triumph to Edinburgh.

Strachan had already been rewarded for his services with money and jewels ; and after despatching orders to Leslie to send Montrose at once to Edin-

burgh, the Parliament ordered a public fast day as a thanksgiving for his capture.

With feelings of great thankfulness they deliberated on the punishment that should be his, as well as the manner in which it should be carried out. They did not take long to deliberate. All agreed that it should be death, with torture! Thus the fate of Montrose was sealed as soon as he was captured. He was condemned, untried and unheard in his own defence.

The Committee appointed by Parliament to advise on so weighty a matter was composed solely of the Marquis's enemies. Their advice was given in writing, without one voice being lifted up to plead for a fair and open trial. It was determined that Montrose should die.

Holburne conveyed his prisoner first of all to Lord Sutherland's castle of Skibo. After staying there two nights, he was taken to Lord Seaforth's castle of Braan in Ross-shire.

Colonel Strachan left Leslie and Holburne in the Highlands, and dragged Montrose in triumph to Edinburgh. No pity, no generosity, seemed to influence Strachan in his treatment of his noble prisoner.

The Covenanters knew that a halo of glory was still round the prisoner's very name. For years

Montrose's exploits had rung in their ears and jarred on their feelings. Now he was in their power, they determined to humble him to the dust. Clad in the mean, ragged, and dirty garb in which he had been found, Montrose was compelled to mount a poor little Highland pony, and in that piteous guise Strachan led him through town to town, prolonging the route, that his triumph might be all the greater.

The Presbyterian clergy encouraged their flocks to pelt him with mud and stones, while a herald preceded the prisoner, crying, 'Here comes James Graham, traitor to his country!'

His long hair, unshaven face, and mean clothing were intended to humiliate him ; but Montrose's lofty bearing, and the unshaken dignity with which he bore his sufferings, silenced many who came to revile the fallen hero. It was treason to express any sympathy with Montrose ; and but for the fear of punishment, the peasantry, as the cavalcade passed by, would fain have pitied him.

He was led slowly on. At Pitcaple, a fine old place belonging to the Leslie's, the means of escape were offered him. The lady of the house was a distant relative of the Graham's. She saw and pitied Montrose. Watching her opportunity, she stole into his room at night, and showed

him a spring in the wall, that pushed back one of the panels, leading to a subterranean passage below.

The outlet was smaller than a narrow chimney, and Montrose, while thanking his generous hostess, refused to go through it; telling her, with a smile on his lips, that 'rather than be smothered in so dark a hole, he had better meet what awaited him in Edinburgh.' The lady sorrowfully withdrew, grieving that she had not prevailed on her hapless guest to attempt his escape. That room at Pitcaple is still called 'Montrose's chamber.'

As they drew near Kinnaird, each wood and muir of Forfarshire must have reminded Montrose of happier days.

It was at the castle of Kinnaird that Montrose's brief married life had been passed. Magdalene Carnegie, his fair young Countess, had died there, and his children were at that very time living at the castle, under the care of his father-in-law, the venerable Earl of Southesk.

How little, in those calm days of bygone years, when hunting, hawking, or golfing, a visit to some neighbour, or the weekly attendance at kirk, had alone broken the monotony of life, had Montrose dreamed of this last visit to his father-in-law's home! Montrose loved but once in his life; and when the

gentle Magdalene died, leaving him a young widower with three children, he enshrined her memory in his heart, an amulet against all meaner loves, and one that prevented his ever forming a second marriage. In his own words—

Let no man to more love pretend
Than he has hearts in store ;
True love begun shall never end :
Love one and love no more !'

When Montrose found himself so near Lord Southesk's, he entreated Strachan to let him bid his children farewell. Even his pitiless jailor could not say nay to that request; and the cavalcade halted at the castle, that the touching farewell might be taken.

Montrose knew what fate awaited him, and knew as he strained each dear child to his breast that it was a last embrace; yet he preserved an unbroken serenity of manner, determined that his calmness should shame the malice of his persecutors. Thus he bid them farewell, and asked a last blessing from his father-in-law, whose own descendants were doomed to suffer for their devotion to future Stuarts; for the Southesk fortunes were ruined in the rising of 1715, and the present Earl is only a younger branch of that loyal Carnegie family. He had indeed gone through his greatest trial. How,

as mounted again, and turning his back for ever on Kinnaird, must his thoughts have dwelt on his wife's tomb in the little churchyard near the castle, and the future of his hapless children! All he felt, however, he jealously guarded from his jailor's eyes, and he was outwardly calm when the Covenanters next halted at a place called Grange.

The owner of the castle was a 'red-hot Puritan,' but he had known Montrose in happier years; and as there is a record that the Lord of Grange had given him a hawk, it is probable that they had once enjoyed good sport together. His host, however, only welcomed Montrose to Grange as a captive, and felt but little pity for his forlorn and piteous state, for he was in rags, and not suffered to wear garments more fitting to his station, nor to shave off the long beard which gave to his countenance a wild and miserable appearance.

The wife of James Durham, his host, was named Margaret, and was by birth a Scott of Brotherton. She saw and pitied Montrose, and, like the lady of Pitcaple, determined to try and save him.

Like a wily woman, she knew that her best chance of doing so lay in pretending great warmth on the opposite side. She stealthily noticed how Montrose was guarded, and then made a great show of noisy hospitality, bidding her butler 'let the soldiers want

for no drink,' and vowing that in the good Covenant's cause it 'behoved her to bestir herself.' She did all that lay in her power to circulate her husband's good liquor.

With great outward show of kindness she plied the guard with strong ale and whisky; and the Highlanders, not being used to such copious libations, soon became 'starke drunke.'

Overjoyed when she saw them all asleep in the hall, she went into Montrose's room, and persuaded him to put on one of her gowns, and disguise himself as a woman. She told him if he trusted to her guidance he would yet be saved. Just as the lady of Grange had guided the pretended female safely through the sleeping guards to the other door, a soldier came in. The man was less drunk than the others. He seized the dame, and in the scuffle that ensued he recognised the features of Montrose.

The man was instantly sobered. He gave a prompt alarm, and the captive was reconducted to his grated room, and more strictly guarded than before; while James Durham and all his household were made prisoners, charged with having aided the Cavalier to escape.

'Don't blame my husband,' cried the intrepid dame of Grange. 'I planned it all, and he knew nothing of my scheme. I only wish I had suc-



Montrose attempts to Escape.—Page 274.
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ceeded, and given the Marquis of Montrose his freedom.'

The next day the Covenanters and their prisoner stopped at Dundee, a town that had little reason to regard Montrose with favour, yet which on this occasion did all it could to mitigate his sufferings. Its burghers, declaring it was a shame to let the Marquis wear the miserable rags in which he appeared, provided him with garments more fitting to his rank, and presented him with a handsome sum of money.

This generous conduct should have shamed Strachan and his companions, who treated their prisoner as if he were the vilest felon in Scotland, instead of an unfortunate general who had lost all through the accident of fortune and a devoted loyalty to the royal cause.

The kindness of the citizens of Dundee was the more unexpected by Montrose, as he knew that his Redshanks had formerly plundered the city. The kindness he there met with was a ray of light in his melancholy progress towards Edinburgh.





CHAPTER VIII.

‘I’ve told thee how the Southrons fell
Beneath the broad claymore,
And how we smote the Campbell clan
By Inverlochy’s shore.
I’ve told thee how we swept Dundee,
And tamed the Lindsay’s pride ;
But never have I told thee yet
How the great Marquis died !’

—AYTOUN.

WHILE Strachan, charged by the Parliament to convey Montrose to Edinburgh, was, as we have seen, executing his task with rigid severity, Leslie was scouring the country in search of the fugitive remnant of the defeated army.

Sir Harry Graham, brother to Montrose, was in Orkney when Leslie invested the Castle of Dunbeath. The garrison, hearing that Montrose had without doubt been defeated and taken prisoner,

thought it useless to resist, and surrendered to Leslie's soldiers. The garrison, principally Dutchmen, were most of them allowed to return home unmolested, while some of them were enlisted in Sir Robert Murray's regiment of Scots in France. Sir Harry Graham fled to France.

This regiment of Scots had existed in France since the days of Louis the Ninth, and had always been highly prized by the French sovereigns. Charles the Second while in exile belonged to it, as also did the gallant George Gordon Marquis of Huntly in 1625, and James the Second while Duke of York. The Marquis of Huntly, as Captain of the 'Gendarmes Ecossais,' had fought in Louis the Thirteenth's army, and greatly distinguished himself; so that, as it was considered an honour to belong to the Scottish regiment, the soldiers of the garrison therefore appear to have been treated with unwonted leniency in being sent into that service.

After subduing Dunbeath, nothing remained but to capture the venerable Castle of Kirkwall, which Montrose had left under the command of Colonel Johnstone. In it were all his papers, military stores, weapons, and the suits of armour sent by the Queen of Sweden, but which did not arrive soon enough to be used in Montrose's sad and short campaign.

With the capture of Kirkwall, which had been

built five hundred years before by one of the Counts of Orcades, and that of Jutland, both of which had been left very insufficiently garrisoned by Montrose, Leslie considered his task completed.

The little frigate of sixteen guns, sent by the Swedes, fell also into their hands; but the papers were more prized than anything else, as among them was a list of gentlemen favourable to Montrose's enterprise. These were immediately arrested, and taken prisoners by the Covenanters, on the mere suspicion of belonging to the Cavalier party.

The information Argyle obtained through these documents was made use of also against the Marquis, who was condemned before he reached Leith, untried by the laws of his country, and unheard in his own defence.

Among the papers was one from James Lord Sinclair, declaring that, the treaty of Breda being a mere trap for the King, he saw no means of bringing about his restoration except by the sword.

After ordering a solemn fast and thanksgiving day, the Parliament appointed a Committee 'to advise the Estates' on the grave subject of Montrose's punishment.

The Committee met on the 17th of May, 1650, and their deliberations lasted a very short time. The men who composed it were all enemies to Montrose,

—Argyle among the number,—and they quickly sentenced him to an ignominious death. It was thought advisable to beg them to write the sentence, and accordingly they gave the Parliament a written paper to the following effect, namely, that as soon as ‘the traitor, James Graham,’ should arrive outside the city, their advice was, ‘that the Magistrates and common hangman should meet him and tie him bareheaded upon a cart. Thus bound, the hangman should draw him through the town, the history of his battles appended round his neck, and that he should be hanged in view of the whole populace, and then beheaded and quartered,—his head to be placed on the Tolbooth, and his limbs to be distributed to the various cities of Perth, Glasgow, Aberdeen, and Stirling.’ If he repented of the crimes of loyalty and honour,—so ran the sentence,—his body was to be buried in Greyfriars ; but if he died without regretting his actions, it was to share the fate of the remains of thieves and malefactors, and be buried under the gibbet.

It was the eighteenth of May, 1650, that, after crossing the Firth of Forth, the cavalcade conducting Montrose to his doom reached Leith.

Suspense was over. The mind of the Marquis was made up to bravely meet his fate. The kindness shown him at Dundee enabled him to enter

Edinburgh in garments not altogether unsuitable to his rank ; and as he took his place on the rude cart that met him at the Watergate, it was with a calmness and grace that his ignominious treatment could not destroy.

The fast had been held three days before ; and after denouncing him from their pulpits, the Presbyterian clergymen, in their long black cloaks, Geneva bands, and pointed hats, mingled with the crowd and encouraged them to execrate and abuse the victim as he passed along.

The hangman ordered Montrose to take off his hat—for part of his sentence was that he should undergo his punishment uncovered.

Montrose hesitated, on which the hangman snatched it rudely from his noble head, and then placed him on the cart, binding him firmly across his arms and shoulders, the cords being safely attached to holes made in the rough wooden pieces of the cart behind the chair on which sat the victim. The hangman sat in front, a single horse drawing the vehicle ; and, as if to show that the very executioner was of higher rank than the illustrious Montrose, he carried a long staff in his hand, was bonneted, and wore a ghastly livery.

‘ They brought him to the Watergate,
Hard bound with hempen span,

As though they held a lion there,
And not a fenceless man.
They set him high upon a cart,—
The hangman rode below,—
They drew his hands behind his back,
And bared his noble brow.
Then as a hound is slipped from leash,
They cheered, the common throng.¹

It was getting late in that summer's day when Montrose, thus degraded, was led to the Watergate. He was met there by the Provost and burghers of Edinburgh, who read his sentence to him before he mounted the cart.

Thousands of people awaited him in the High Street and Canongate, and every house was crowded from the top to the bottom with a prejudiced, angry mob, eager to see The Graham, and how he bore his sentence.

The cavalcade nears the Watergate. Every neck is stretched out to gaze upon the proud and haughty Montrose.

The Magistrates read out his sentence to him. As the sound of the last sentence dies away, and the cruel yell of the mob, eager to sate their hatred with a sight of his sufferings, rises in the air, Montrose, almost as calm and unmoved as if about to tread some courtly hall, calmly says in reply :

‘I willingly obey, but am sorry that through me

¹ Aytoun.

His Majesty, whose person I represent, should be so dishonoured !'

Although his words were brave, his face, as he entered the court and submitted to his fate, was pale and wan. Montrose bore his fate with outward calmness ; but one can guess the torture that so proud a man must have endured, as he rides on, unable to lift his hand to his brow, his head bare, and the sun streaming down on his face and figure. The Magistrates and burghers accompanied the procession, which was preceded by a melancholy cavalcade of his fellow-prisoners, bareheaded and on foot as if they were common thieves instead of chivalrous gentlemen, guilty only of loyalty and fidelity to their sovereign.

The clergy had especially enjoined all the members of their flocks to hiss and execrate 'that bloody and excommunicate traitor, James Graham ;' but by degrees the yells died away, and the excited populace gazed with involuntary compassion on that grave, heart-broken face, looking sadly down from the hangman's cart upon the now hushed and awe-stricken multitude. Does Montrose recall his past triumphs ? and do the loud shouts and curses that first greet him remind him, by contrast, of the cries of joy that after many a victory his faithful Redshanks had been wont to greet their hero ?

Alas ! *they* are far away ; some slain in battle, some skulking from Argyle's bloodhounds, as they track each vale and hill for 'recusant men' ! Perchance, too, his father's heart remembers in that hour of anguish those children he will never see again ; but who, when party prejudice has died away, and when the royal cause once more prospers, will live to hear their father named with honour as Montrose the Cavalier.

The street along which the cavalcade passed was very wide in parts, and every portion of it was filled with the populace. There were many women in the crowd, and some of them had been especially violent against Montrose. But now their half-uttered taunts died away before the sublimity of the martyr's bearing, and their hearts, quickly stirred, were moved to feelings of deep compassion ; and such as *dared* murmured blessings and prayers instead of curses.

A deep silence fell on the crowd as the procession advanced, and the Presbyterian clergy marked with consternation that their flocks were 'backsliding' and sympathizing with that 'malignant Montrose.'

The city guard was replaced as it neared the Canongate by a body of sixty soldiers, with three corporals, sergeants, and officers, belonging to 'Sawers' musqueteers.' These armed men sur-

rounded the car, while their commander rode at their head.

At this period the infantry of an army was chiefly composed of pikemen and 'musqueteers.' The pikeman carried a formidable weapon eighteen feet long, but the musqueteer bore his piece on his shoulder, holding his 'musket rest' in the same hand.

The officer who commanded the soldiers on the occasion of Montrose's entrance into Edinburgh, was a grim-featured, large-nosed, repulsive-looking man, who pretended to be devotedly attached to the Covenant, but who at heart was indifferent alike to all religions.

His real name was Thomas Weir of Kirktoune, Lanarkshire; but he was best known as 'the Wizard of the North,' for the common people believed him to be a sorcerer. He was burned at the stake in 1670 for sorcery and other crimes. As major of the military in Edinburgh, he was selected to escort Montrose along a portion of the route. Weir's grim figure, enveloped in a black cloak, added to the ghastly nature of the sight, and even the mothers and widows of some who had fallen in the ranks of Montrose's foes could not but shed tears at the piteous spectacle of the great hero's degradation. His silent dignity struck them forcibly. A low murmur of sympathy broke forth, but it was

instantly quelled by the shouts of the brutal soldiery.

One heart resolutely excluded the sentiment of pity from its owner's breast.

Argyle's son, Lord Lorne, had just married the Lady Mary Stuart, Lord Moray's daughter. The bride's father lived in the Canongate; and, with fiendish glee and unexampled bad taste, Argyle and the newly-wedded pair, with a gay party of friends, had taken their places on the broad balcony of this mansion, overlooking the street. Argyle, who, as a Cavalier historian asserts, had never dared to face Montrose sword in his hand, now looked exultingly down on his victim, bound hand and foot, pinioned in the hangman's cart!

Whether by design or accident, the cart stopped for a moment beneath Lord Moray's balcony.

As the horse stopped, a woman's coarse, unfeeling laughter broke upon the awe-stricken stillness of the crowd. The people, gathered in such numbers to see Montrose, had been prepared to hoot at and hiss him, but they had respected the sight of that 'pale wan face.' It was one infamous woman only—Jean Gordon, Countess of Haddington—who did not hesitate to insult the noble prisoner. She stepped forward and spat in his face! Even Argyle seemed to shrink back as he witnessed this atro-

city, and a voice was heard among the crowd crying—

‘She ought to sit upon the cart for her own wickedness!’

This unwomanly act was, strange to say, the act of the sister of that brave and gallant Huntly, who five years before had fallen at the battle of Alford, fighting by the side of the Marquis.

Even then the Marquis remained unmoved and calm. His dignified demeanour put to shame the unfeeling conduct of Argyle’s niece and her party, who laughed and jested while their fallen enemy passed the balcony. To quote again the beautiful poem of one who has sung Montrose’s praises in language that will live as long as the hero’s fame, the procession went along—

‘But onwards—always onwards,
In silence and in gloom,—
The dreary pageant laboured
Till it reached the house of doom.
Then first a woman’s voice was heard,
In jeer and laughter loud,
And an angry cry and a hiss arose
From the heart of the tossing crowd.
Then as the Graeme looked upwards,
He saw the ugly smile
Of him who sold his king for gold,—
The master fiend Argyle!’

The distance from the Watergate to the Tolbooth was only a mile, but so slowly did the cart proceed

that it actually took three hours to convey Montrose to his prison, and it was close upon seven o'clock when they reached the gloomy fortress.

Weary, indeed, must Montrose have been; but even then his courtly manner did not desert him.

He thanked the executioner for 'driving the cart so well,' and for his trouble gave him a handsome vail of gold.

He was unbound, taken from his ignominious seat, and led into the Tolbooth, where he was handed over to the safe custody of Colonel Wallace the governor.

After so agitating a day, it would have seemed but common humanity to leave Montrose to repose in his comfortless chamber; but the Parliament were in too great a hurry to compass his destruction, or to wait even a day longer before he was examined. The day of his entry was Saturday, and Sunday intervening, the Covenanters determined not to wait till the Monday.

Parliament met, and immediately formed a committee, charged to see and examine Montrose.

He declined to see them, but they would take no denial, and insisted on his presence.

Montrose replied to their questions, that before he answered them he must be satisfied that they were acting for his royal master the King. In vain

the Commissioners pressed him to answer. He preserved a dignified silence.

Finding him thus resolute, the Committee went back to the Parliament, who sent them back to Montrose to say that 'they and the King were agreed,' but that they would leave him in peace till Monday.

In fact, Parliament had determined to get all the information they could from Montrose about the King's party; and knowing the man, thought that he would be more inclined to disclose facts if he knew that, since his defeat, Charles the Second had concluded a treaty with them, and recognised them as a properly constituted Parliament.

It was very late when the deputies brought this information back to the Marquis, who, when told that they would leave him alone till Monday, said that he was glad of it, as he was very weary with his long journey, and with the somewhat tedious compliment they had that day paid him.

Next day being Sunday, the Presbyterian clergy rebuked their flocks for 'their profane tenderness in not denouncing the Graham' as he passed along the streets; and some even went so far as to regret that the people had not reviled and stoned him. As the Church Courts in those days enjoined every parishioner to be present 'at each diet of worship,' the Presbyterians had large congregations as they

expatiated on the enormous wickedness of not hissing 'the Graham.'

When kirk was over, and the Covenanters had ended their long discourses, several of their leaders went to the Tolbooth to taunt Montrose, and urged him to confess. His prison doors were guarded by Major Weir, who made Montrose's captivity none the less irksome by smoking tobacco, the scent of which the Marquis was known to detest. Weir also constantly reviled him with such epithets as 'dog, atheist, and murderer!' None of his friends were allowed admittance to his cell; while weary and sad, he longed to repose, but patiently bore the visits paid him by the Presbyterian clergy; merely saying when they exhorted him to confession and reproached him for his crimes, that he was far from being 'affronted' at the treatment that he had received.

'They were mistaken,' said Montrose, smiling. 'He thought it the most honourable journey he had ever taken,—God having supported him all the way, enabling him to bear the reproaches of men, by recalling to his mind that he then suffered for the King's sacred cause.'

There was no insult that his tormentors did not heap on him in reply. They addressed him as 'James Graham:' and one bigoted clergyman called

him 'a faggot of hell,' and said 'he already saw him burning!'

Malignity, however, did not alter our hero's firm and dignified bearing. He bore all gently, till at nightfall he was left alone to get what repose he could before the break of day.

When summoned early next morning to appear before Parliament, he attired himself in a splendid suit of new clothes, that he had purposely ordered to be made, and probably purchased with the money given him by the burghers of Dundee.

First, he wore a scarlet rochet or coat, trimmed with silver ribbons, richly lined with crimson, and reaching to his knees. Under this gay coat he wore black and richly laced under-clothes, carnation coloured silk stockings, handsome garters, roses in his shoes, and a large beaver hat in his hand. The gay ribbons that formed the tie of the hatband, garter, or shoe, were called 'roses' in those times, and were evidently worn large, as Ben Jonson says—

' My heart was at my mouth
Till I had viewed his shoes well ; for those roses
Were big enough to hide a cloven foot.'

His shirt was trimmed with the finest lace. Thus attired, he walked with modest dignity into the Parliament House, uncovering as he bowed his head to the members in recognition of an autho-

rity sanctioned by his sovereign. He showed no signs of fear ; but his face looked very pale and sad. As he gazed around and saw an assemblage of so many of his enemies, he sighed, and then resumed his calm demeanour.

There were several noblemen present ; among them the Lord High Chancellor, the President of the Estates, Argyle, the Earls of Eglinton, Roxburghe, Buccleuch, Balcarres, Tweeddale, and numerous others, both titled and untitled, belonging to the highest families in Scotland.

The proceedings began by the Chancellor (the Earl of Loudon), a man of notorious evil character, rising and delivering a long speech, in which he referred to Montrose's rebellions, and to his desertion of the Covenant, and all his (so-called) crimes against the State. The Chancellor used as much invective and personal abuse as possible ; and Montrose listened calmly to every word, though his eyes roved from side to side, as if in search of some kind face to cheer and pity him. When the Chancellor's long speech was over, Montrose rose to reply.

'If I appear before you uncovered, it is because my sovereign has recognised you. I have always tried to behave like a good Christian and a loyal subject. I entered into the first Covenant and kept

it faithfully, until I found that some, under the pretence of religion, used it for a cloak of their own ambitious designs.

‘I never promised obedience to the second Covenant, and am in no way bound to respect it. I had the royal warrant for my wars ; and though several acts of cruelty were committed by my soldiery, I always punished such outrages with severity.

‘I have never taken the blood of a prisoner, even in retaliation for the slaughter of my soldiers and friends ; and in battle I have saved the lives of thousands.

‘I landed in Orkney at the express command of Charles the Second, whom you yourselves proclaimed as King, and with whom you are now in treaty. I therefore desire to be treated by you as a Christian man, to whom many among you are indebted for life and property, when, by the fortune of war, both were at my mercy. Act by me, my lords, according to the laws of nature and of nations, but chiefly by those of our native Scotland ; judging as one day you shall all be judged, when standing at the throne of heaven !’

Montrose delivered this speech with calm and manly fortitude ; and even those most prejudiced against him could not help admiring his dignity. He had been judged beforehand, however ; and his

speech and his hearers' sympathy availed him nothing.

The Chancellor alone heard him unmoved. When Montrose had finished, he said that he had proved 'his acts of hostility, and that he was an infamous, perjured, treacherous person, worse than any this land had ever before brought forth; the most inhuman butcher and murderer of his nation, and a sworn enemy to the Covenant and peace of his country; one whose boundless pride and ambition, after ruining the father, had done all that he could to destroy the son!'

When Montrose would have again stood up to reply to these undeserved insults, Loudon bid him 'to hold his tongue,' and to kneel while his sentence was pronounced.

He complied, merely saying that he knelt out of respect to the King, who had acknowledged their authority, but not from 'any meanness of spirit, or disposition to fawn to them!'

In that position, he calmly listened while one of his most inveterate enemies, Sir Archibald Johnston of Warriston, clerk register, read his sentence. He was to be hanged on a gibbet at the Cross of Edinburgh. His 'declaration' was to be hung round his neck by a rope; and after his body had been suspended three hours, it was to be cut down by the

hangman, decapitated, and then to have his hands and legs cut off ; his head to be affixed to an iron pole, and stuck up over the western gable of the Tolbooth, one hand 'to be set up' at Perth, one at Stirling, a leg and foot at Aberdeen, and one at Glasgow.

Montrose drew himself proudly up when he had heard the whole of his sentence, and cried out 'that he took it for a greater honour to have his head stand on the prison gate for this quarrel, than were his portrait hung up in the King's own chamber ;' and, added he, with a fire in his eye that all the insults heaped on him had failed to quench, 'I only wish—for fear my loyalty should be forgotten—I had enough limbs to be distributed in every city in Christendom, as records of my loyalty to my king and love to my country !'

It was an old custom in Scotland, that the executioner should repeat a prisoner's doom, and it was not part of the programme that a single iota of degradation should be omitted from Montrose's punishment.

When the grim executioner had done his duty, Montrose was reconducted to the Tolbooth. He spent his last night on earth in meditation and prayer, heedless of the taunts and jibes of his brutal jailor, Major Weir.

He was not allowed to see a single friend ; yet, throughout that night, he was frequently visited by Presbyterian clergymen, whose vanity perhaps persuaded them that their eloquence might yet induce the Marquis to repent !

Montrose, while deprecating their intrusive visits as hindrances to his prayers and meditations, yet received them gently. At last, however, his patience gave way.

‘Why,’ he cried, ‘do you not leave the last hours of an unfortunate man in peace? Will nothing satisfy you but tormenting me?’

‘Nothing!’ said the bigot who was preaching at him—‘for I know no other method of humbling your pride, and turning you to God.’

‘By a warrant from the Kirk we stayed with him a while about his soul’s condition,’ wrote one of his persecutors ; ‘but we found him continuing in his old pride, and taking very ill what was spoken to him, saying, “I pray you, gentlemen, let me die in peace.” It was answered, that he might die in peace, being reconciled to the Lord and to His Kirk.’

Finding they made little or no impression, the Presbyterian ministers reported their ill success to the Parliament, and requested leave to be present at his execution, ‘in case, at the last moment, that he relented.’

These fanatics averred that his soul was in peril, should he die while still excommunicated by the Kirk.

Pressed by the clergy and reviled by his jailor, the constancy of Montrose never once forsook him. The high-mindedness with which this great man met his terrible doom, cannot be better expressed than in his own words, written with the diamond of his ring on the window-pane of his prison, during that last sad night. Montrose had cultivated in happier hours and times his gift of poetry, and the religious feeling breathed in the following lines did not spring only from his trouble in his last hours :—

‘ Let them bestow on every airt a limb,
Then open all my veins, that I may swim
To Thee, my Maker, in that crimson lake ;
Then place my parboiled head upon a stake ;
Scatter my ashes, throw them in the air ;
Lord, since Thou know’st where all these atoms are,
I’m hopeful Thou’lt recover once my dust,
And confident Thou’lt raise me with the just.’

Early next morning, when he had had some brief rest, Montrose was astonished at hearing, outside the Tolbooth walls, a great blowing of trumpets and beating of drums. He inquired the reason.

Major Weir replied that Parliament had deemed it safer to call the soldiers out to guard the ap-

proaches to the scaffold, for fear that his 'malignant' friends might attempt to rescue him even at the eleventh hour.

'Indeed,' said Montrose, smiling. 'Is it possible that I, who am bound for slaughter, am still so formidable to all these good folks! I shall be still more terrible to them, then, when I am dead, I suppose.'

The Parliament need have feared no rescue. Though the Cavalier party was overwhelmed with grief at the defeat of Invercarron, they were powerless to avert Montrose's execution. The Presbyterian party was strong and vindictive; and even those who deplored the gross injustice of putting Montrose to death without a fair trial, did not dare to say so loudly.

Montrose's friend, Cardinal de Retz, heard of what was about to take place from a Monsieur de Groymond, an accredited minister to the Parliament from Louis XIV., and wrote a strong letter to the 'Parliament and Estates of Scotland, begging that they would release Montrose, and not suffer him to be insulted.' But when the missive was written, the fatal deed had already been perpetrated, for the letter was dated the 10th of June 1650, and Montrose was executed on the 21st of May in that same year.

Montrose's friends, though not permitted to see

and take leave of him, had supplied him with money to enable him to appear richly clad on the day of his execution.

He took the greatest pains with his appearance while dressing himself for his execution, although his preparations were conducted before a knot of Covenanting Puritans, still persecuting him with their homilies. Among these 'dour carles' was the man who had read his sentence the preceding day.

It is said that this man, Sir Archibald Johnston, had advised Argyle on the details of the sentence, and had negatived milder counsels when his punishment had been discussed in Parliament. No insult was beneath their malice. Montrose wore his long locks in the Cavalier fashion; and seeing him engaged in carefully preparing them, Sir Archibald tauntingly inquired if 'such an occupation befitted so solemn an hour !'

'As long as my head is my own,' replied the Marquis, 'I will dress it as I please ; to-morrow, when it is yours, you may dress it as you please !'

Nothing could surpass the splendid appearance of the Marquis on that memorable day. He looked as if ready to visit some festive hall ; as calm as if about to tread a measure with some courtly beauty. His mien was heroic, and his bright piercing eyes

were lighted up with undaunted courage. His whole appearance was so lofty and magnificent, that as he stepped out to once more ascend the miserable cart, an involuntary murmur of admiration broke out among the crowd.

He had breakfasted off a piece of bread dipped in ale; and when his jailor told him the dread hour was come, he drew on his hands a pair of delicate white gloves, throwing over his rich scarlet coat a most splendid cloak, embroidered with gold and silver lace. His hat, as richly decked as his cloak, he carried in his hand.

‘So grand,’ wrote his chaplain Wishart, Montrose’s faithful historian, ‘was his air, so much bravery, majesty, and gravity appeared in his countenance, that the whole city was shocked at the cruelty which was designed him, and even his enemies were obliged to confess that he was a man of the most lofty and elevated soul, and the most unshaken constancy and courage that his age had produced.’

Even the indignity of ascending for the second time the hangman’s cart fell powerless on Montrose; for as he ascended the scaffold, he said to a person standing by, ‘You see how I am honoured! yet after all I never in my life felt more delight in riding in a coach than I have in that poor cart.’

All Edinburgh had come out to see the great Marquis die.

‘And young and old, and rich and poor,
Came forth to see him die !’

A great multitude had for hours been awaiting him. Long before he had left the Heart of Midlothian the whole space around the gibbet was crammed with men, women, and children, all come to witness a great hero’s last moments.

His demeanour would have shamed a Roman hero—it was so calm, so lofty. His rich dress, carefully adjusted, set off the beauty and grace of his handsome person. Even a brave man might have shrunk back in terror at sight of that ghastly gibbet. The noose dangled down, for his enemies were relentless, and he was to be hanged instead of being beheaded,—decapitation in those days being the nobleman’s privilege.

The scaffold was nearly level with the spectators, and the gibbet was erected in its centre. At the lower end of the scaffold stood a knot of Presbyterian clergy, still bent on tormenting their victim. In another part were the Magistrates, bound by the duties of their office to see the sentence carried into effect.

Montrose spoke a few words to the latter, but

never even glanced in the direction of the clergymen, and then prepared to ascend the gibbet.

‘He would not deign them word or sign,
But alone he bent the knee,
And veiled his face for Christ’s dear sake
Beneath the gallows tree !’

The buff-coated soldiers formed a compact guard round the scaffold, beyond which a great sea of faces surged ; every eye riveted on the graceful figure of the chief actor in the scene, the great and good Montrose. A little apart stood another figure, the executioner, with a long staff, the insignia of his terrible office, in his hand. Every prospect or chance of rescue was provided for ; while on a bench near the ladder were a number of knives and axes to dismember the body after death.

The Marquis calmly glanced at all these dread preparations ; but though he had refused the ministrations of the Presbyterian clergy, he prayed fervently, covering his face with his hands, as he stood beneath the gibbet.

He had wished to address the populace, but that privilege was strictly forbidden. A boy, said to have been purposely placed there to record his last words, took down in cipher the sentences he addressed to those about him. His dying address has been thus handed down to posterity.

‘I would be very sorry,’ he said, ‘if any one good Christian should be scandalized by my death. Doth not sometimes a just man perish in his righteousness, and a wicked man prosper in his malice !

‘They that know me should not condemn me for it, for many greater than me have been dealt with as hardly. Yet, however I may consider my fate hard as inflicted by man, I acknowledge it to be just as coming directly from God. I therefore blame no one for it, nor complain of any one’s judgment. I take it from the hand of God, whose instruments they are, and forgive them for it ; may God also forgive them.

‘To exonerate myself from the scandal with which many good people load me, I maintain that all I did originated out of loyalty to the King.

‘I have not sinned against man, but against God ; and with Him there is mercy, and this is my ground of hope in drawing near to Him.

‘I pray God that there be no further judgments on this land. As for that which the Lord’s people urge against me, namely, that I am excommunicated by the Church, I can only say, it is not my fault, as the sentence was incurred from my zeal in the King’s service. Yet I am sorry that they excommunicated me ; and if I could be relaxed without infringing the laws of God, or my allegiance to the

King, I would be very happy. If not, I must appeal to God, who will be a less partial judge. It is said that I have blamed the King. God forbid! For the late King lived a saint and died a martyr! May my end be like his; for if ever I could wish my soul in another man's stead, it should be in his. As for his present Majesty, his commands to me were very just, and he will carry out all that he engages to do. Do not mistake my behaviour for obstinacy. I can only carry out the dictates of my own conscience, according to the workings of God's Spirit. I desire not to be presumptuous, but it is God who supports me under the terrors of death.

'I have no more to say, but to crave your charity and prayers. I pray for all. I leave my soul to God, my service to my prince, my goodwill to my friends. I have said all this to discharge my conscience, and the rest I leave to the mercy of God.'

The Presbyterian ministers begged him again to reconsider his determination, and to make his peace with the Kirk, by avowing his past errors.

'I have already,' replied Montrose, 'poured out my soul before the Lord, who knows my heart, and into whose hands I now commend my spirit. He has given me peace through Jesus Christ my Redeemer; and therefore if you will not join me in

prayer, my repeating all that I have said before will be scandalous.'

The Presbyterian ministers told him that as long as he remained excommunicated by the Kirk, they could not pray with him.

He then, after again praying, began to prepare for death.

He fee'd the executioner handsomely with gold, after inquiring how long he was to hang there.

'Three hours !' replied the Calcraft of the day, bursting into tears. Montrose earnestly begged to be permitted to wear his hat and cloak, but even that favour was not allowed, and he went bare-headed to his doom. A copy of his memoirs by his chaplain, and another of his declarations as Captain-General of Scotland, was hung round his neck, as decreed by the Estates ; but he bore it cheerfully, saying—

'Though it had pleased the King to make me a Knight of the most Honourable Order of the Garter, yet do I not think myself more honoured by that than by the contents of this book, the true testimony of my loyalty !'

His calmness almost gave way when the Magistrates ordered his arms to be pinioned. He seemed justly indignant, but said nothing till it was done, when, turning to his executioner, he inquired 'if

he had any more dishonour—as they conceived it—to put on him; if so, he was ready to receive it!’

With the same undaunted courage and dignity as he had hitherto borne all his misfortunes, he mounted the ladder that led to the gibbet. The clock of a neighbouring church struck the hour of three as the ladder was drawn from beneath his feet, and the last sounds that Montrose heard, before his soul was launched into eternity, were the sobs of the hangman and the roar that burst from the indignant crowd below.

The great Cavalier was dead.

His body hung for three hours, and then the executioner cut it down, and it fell on its face. It was dismembered in the presence of Argyle’s son, Lord Lorne, who, after ascending the scaffold to gaze in triumph on his father’s dead enemy, remained to see it hewn in pieces.

Argyle, however, had better taste, and was not present at his rival’s execution. It is said that he shed tears at the recital of his noble death. Perhaps they were tears of remorse.

Thus died Montrose, in the thirty-eighth year of his age. His name and memory will ever be honoured as one of history’s grandest characters. His faults were those of his age, but his virtues

were far in advance of his time ; and his dignity, forbearance, and fortitude, would have made his name illustrious even without the long list of splendid victories by which he had made himself famous.

The fate of his remains is remarkable. His head was stuck on a gable of the old Tolbooth of Edinburgh, next to that of his uncle, Lord Gowrie, which had been there fifty years.

For fear that his friends should remove it, the Parliament ordered it to be secured with a strong iron bar.

His body was buried on the Boroughmuir Road, at a place devoted to the execution of malefactors ; but one devoted friend, by dint of paying a large sum of money, got possession of his heart.

It was Lady Napier who dared and did the deed of getting Montrose's heart into her own possession. This lady was the wife of Montrose's dearest friend. She had a casket, made out of the blade of her hero's sword, in which to enclose his heart, and her descendant still possesses a portrait of her, where she is represented with the sacred object at her side.

The gallows on which he suffered was left standing a long time in the place where it was erected, with a view of striking terror into the minds of any Cava-

liers ; but the other prisoners taken with the great Marquis after Invercarron were all beheaded by the Maiden, or Scottish guillotine,—hanging having been reserved for their leader, to mark the ignominious nature of his punishment.





CHAPTER IX.

‘ And Scotland, thou may’st veil thy head
In sorrow and in pain ! ’

—AYTOUN.

THE death of Montrose struck terror and consternation into the minds of the English and Scottish Cavaliers.

Such a terrible reprisal on the part of the Covenanters against a fallen foe, seemed to renew all the horror that moderate men had previously felt at the first Charles's death. When Charles the Second was told of Montrose's execution, he is said to have felt both grief and indignation ; but he was not able to indulge in resentment against those who had put his faithful follower to death, for he was in treaty with the very party. When, therefore, a few days after the Marquis's execution, he set sail for Scotland, he was forced to disguise his real sentiments, and meet the perpetrators of what may justly be

called a murder, with assumed cordiality. It was a bad omen for the young King, that, as he passed through Aberdeen, scarcely two months after the death of the great Captain, almost the first object that attracted his attention was the left hand of Montrose, blackening on the Tolbooth gate,—the leg and foot originally destined for Aberdeen having been sent to some other town.

Charles was horror-struck, not only at the ghastly object, but at the bad taste that permitted it to remain exactly opposite the royal lodgings. He had, nevertheless, to smother his indignation, and to content himself with resolving to collect the relics of Montrose's body as soon as he was his own master.

Alas! not even Montrose's execution, nor their negotiations with the young King, sated the appetite of the Covenanters for revenge. The tragedy was not yet played out. Fully forty Cavaliers died on the scaffold between the execution of Montrose and the restoration of Charles the Second.

Sir John Hurry perished soon after his great commander. He had surrendered under a promise of quarter, and fully believed that the Estates would have pardoned him. He was condemned, however, to die at the same place as Montrose, though not by the gallows.

Sir John Hurry was accused, in addition to the

crime of joining the Marquis, of carrying arms under Prince Rupert at Marston Moor. Young Spottiswoode suffered with him. With few exceptions, all met death as calmly, bravely, and well as their great leader Montrose.

Sir Francis Hay of Dalgetty, a Roman Catholic, when led up to the Maiden, made some jesting allusion to its name, and smiling, knelt down, kissed the instrument, and met death without a shudder. The Cavaliers, by the serenity with which they met their doom, seemed determined to triumph over their enemies. Young Spottiswoode, a most accomplished gentleman, used the following short prayer before he died :—

‘ Lord, who hath been graciously pleased to bring me through the wilderness of this world, I trust you will now waft me over this sea of blood to Thy heavenly Canaan !’

A Presbyterian clergyman standing by called out :

‘ Tak tent, tak tent, sir, that ye droun not by the gate !’ (way).

Spottiswoode smiled as he said in reply,—

‘ I hope, sir, I am not an Egyptian !’ on which his tormentor retired dumfounded into the crowd, without another word.

The last Cavalier executed was a Captain Char-

teris, the scion of an old Scottish family. He had been dreadfully wounded, and in the weakness following on his sufferings his friends persuaded him to listen to the Presbyterian ministers. He did as they wished ; and when he was led on to the scaffold, he made a long speech that had been drawn up for him, and avowed his regret for having renounced obedience to the Covenant.

The poor man evidently expected that his life would be spared ; but the Presbyterians, for fear—as an old writer says—‘ he should fall off from his principles again, cut off his head, and sealed his confession with his blood ! ’

Dr. Wishart, the faithful chronicler and friend of Montrose, became chaplain to the Electress Palatine Elizabeth of Bohemia, with whom, in 1660, he returned to England. He was made Bishop of Edinburgh, and his tomb is still to be seen in Holyrood Chapel. Many of the Cavalier prisoners were banished, after having given their word not again to fight against the Covenant. But a time of retribution was to come ; and after the Restoration, the chief number of those who had condemned Montrose and his friends to death, themselves perished on the scaffold.

Charles the Second, after signing a treaty with the Scottish Commissioners, had no alternative but

to set sail for Scotland, which he did a few days after his faithful adherent's execution.

It seems totally inconsistent with the latter event, that the Estates should at that time have entered into a treaty with a prince whom they knew to be at heart a Roman Catholic ; and in order to explain the fact, and to give a consecutive account of what followed, it is necessary to remember the then state of Scotland.

The Scotch are naturally loyal, and the news of the late King's execution had been received by them with the greatest horror and regret ; and it was in obedience to the national voice that Argyle had been forced to negotiate with Charles the Second.

The news of Charles's death at Whitehall reached Edinburgh on February sixth, six days after the bloody deed had been perpetrated.

It was brought into the town by one of Strachan's officers, named Gowan,—a determined Independent and Republican, who had himself witnessed the King's death.

The crowd gathered round the trooper, and listened with rapt attention as he triumphantly recited that all was over, the tyrant dead, and Republicanism established ; but even as he spoke, a revulsion of feeling ran through the populace, and they cast

down their faces, and clenched their hands in grief and despair. The people openly declared their anger at the deed. They felt, as they dispersed mournfully to their homes, that their nation had grievously sinned in giving Charles up to his enemies. God, they declared, was insulted by the regicides, who had beheaded the son of their native princes, the representative of kings who had reigned two thousand years in Scotland ; therefore, seeing that the populace were determined to return to their allegiance, even Argyle dared not oppose the proclamation, at the Edinburgh Cross, of the young King's accession to the throne, under the title of King of Great Britain and Ireland.

But after proclaiming him king, the Estates determined to bind him down to recognise the Covenant.

Before Charles the First's execution, Argyle had deemed it more prudent to discountenance Cromwell's views. For that purpose, he had sent three Commissioners to England to protest against the King's execution. The only reply vouchsafed them was, that the Scotch had better join England in a Federal Republic ; and that as to the Covenant, it was an antiquated document.

The Commissioners, having communicated the state of matters to the Estates, were enjoined to treat with the young Prince ; but Cromwell, hear-

ing that they intended going to Holland, seized them and sent them home to Scotland.

From the moment that their dearly loved Covenant seemed in peril, the ruling powers in Scotland turned their minds towards Charles the Second, and sought to bring him back again. They realized that, much as Charles the First had menaced the Presbyterian religion by his attempts to introduce Episcopacy into Scotland, their religion was more than threatened by the Independents, whose doctrines were thoroughly adverse to their own. The Scots had indeed suffered for their adherence to their faith, for not only had they revolutionized their land in defence of their Covenant, but the whole country seemed under a blight, for the tyranny of their clergy was excessive, and the gloom that pervaded the kingdom was calculated to stifle every innocent pleasure and amusement.

The influence of the Presbyterian clergy amounted to despotism; and although the Presbyterians longed for religious liberty, and had 'sold their King' to get it, they were so bigoted in the belief that no other creed but their own could be right, that the bitterest persecutors of Romanism had never exceeded their wrath against those who held other creeds.

After the Reformation, the whole discipline in

Scotland as regarded Church matters had changed. The old Romish Consistory Courts were abolished, and in their place sprung up Synods and Assemblies. These Synods and the General Assembly were as intolerant as had been their predecessors the Papists.

They passed laws, not only condemning all persons found guilty of celebrating mass to heavy fines, but even to death, if any one so offended three times.

These persecutions continued for a long period, and were not merely directed against the clergy.

In 1612, the Synod of Fife, summoned the first Marquis of Huntly and the Earl of Errol for the crime of refusing to conform to Presbyterianism. Both noblemen were sentenced to be excommunicated ; but one of them, Lord Errol, ended by abjuring the errors of Popery, and his outlawry was thereupon withdrawn.

Several other noblemen were prosecuted ; and as the Synods had full powers to molest and prosecute any holding views different to their own, the issue frequently ended in a forced subscription to the Covenant ; but, as in the case of the Duke of Hamilton, such adherents were not always faithful to their vows.

Any who possessed Popish books were censured ;

and finding that it was almost impossible to quench the zeal of those who still clung to their former creeds, the Synods enacted that no book treating of religion should be published until it had received the approval of the General Assembly.

Good, however, came out of all this intolerance. The Presbyterians, in suppressing Popish books of religion, forced every Roman Catholic to acquire a Bible; and under fear of incurring a penalty of ten pounds if found to possess no copy of the Scriptures, the sacred writings were thus spread far and wide among the burgesses and peasantry.

It is to the zeal with which this was carried out that we may ascribe the intimate knowledge of the Scriptures possessed by Scotch peasantry—a knowledge which has ever since been one of their greatest characteristics.

The Synods abolished all festivals; even the observance of 'Yule' or Christmas being considered superstitious.

The Reformers found great difficulty in checking the abuses of Sunday. Before the downfall of the Papal power in England, the Sabbath had been considered only as sacred from Saturday evening at six o'clock to the following day at the same time. This led to the evening of Sunday being very ill spent. The people used to frequent theatres after

six o'clock ; and even markets were sometimes held in cathedral closes, and within the precincts of monasteries.

The fines, however, inflicted on persons practising trading or secular occupations, put a stop to such practices, and did no doubt a great deal of good ; while, on the other hand, the tyranny of the clergy was excessive, and the noble spirit which had dictated the first Covenant had completely vanished. Instead of preaching the peaceable doctrines of religion, the clergy employed their pulpits to advocate persecution and intolerance, and to hold up distorted passages from Scripture to justify the shedding of human blood.

This religious mania reduced Scotland deplorably, by checking commerce and all kinds of innocent amusements, and leaving the whole government of the realm in the hands of the clergy. Argyle was the leader of the clerical party, at the same time that he was also its tool. He did all that he could to ingratiate himself with the clergy, by doing away with patronage, and raising their stipends.

He proscribed all those Cavaliers who had been engaged in raising levies to oppose the Covenant ; and any individual who had carried arms for the King was declared 'infamous, and unfit to serve the State.'

A perfect trade was carried on by unworthy persons, who informed against 'the Engagers,' Argyle's creatures having spies in all the places where strangers were likely to lodge on first arriving in Edinburgh; and unless large fines were extorted from them, they were imprisoned on a charge of having robbed the State. The burgesses and gentry were thus thoroughly oppressed, and a complete reign of terror was inaugurated.

Argyle had rid himself of his rival Huntly before negotiating with Charles the Second; and the latter step he had been compelled to take in obedience to popular feeling, which was still loyal and true. As we have seen, the young King signed a treaty with the Estates; but the melancholy faces, long, sad-coloured clothes, and clerical bands of the Covenanters were thoroughly uncongenial to Charles the Second, and not the less distasteful were the stringent conditions to which they compelled him to agree before they acknowledged his rank.

The first condition was, that he was to renounce England and to govern Scotland as his ancestors had done before him, acting towards the sister kingdom with distrust and caution. He was also to promise to for ever abandon and to banish from his Court that 'excommunicated man the Marquis of Montrose;' but Charles—whom history has accused

of negotiating with both Montrose and the Estates at the same time, and while authorizing the latter to levy troops for him at home and abroad, had also signed the treaty of Breda with the Covenanters—had not fallen low enough to consent to either condition. He refused to agree to either of them. The King was also to sign the Covenants; to establish Presbyterianism in England, when able to do so; and to submit himself in all things ecclesiastical to the General Assembly; to be, in fact, a mere puppet instead of a King.

When offered these terms, Montrose was still alive, ready to offer him, *without conditions*, his sword and even his life to restore the King's power in England as well as in Scotland.

Montrose distrusted the Estates, and entreated the King to repudiate offers of assistance, when coupled with such hard and ungenerous conditions. Charles was only too willing to accept Montrose's offer, and determined to await the result of the second expedition before setting sail for Scotland. We have seen the sad ending of Montrose's descent on the Highlands, and now—to end this volume properly—we must sketch the King's subsequent conduct, after the failure of his Captain-General to restore the King's power by the sword, when, on the third of June 1650, he arrived in Scotland.

The King was accompanied by several noblemen who had been proscribed by the Estates, among whom were the Dukes of Hamilton and Buckingham, the Earls of Cleveland, Bramford, Lauderdale, and Carnwath, with various other Scottish Cavaliers.

After a perilous journey of twenty days, he reached the Spey, and landed at a little village called Garmouth, at the mouth of that river. He was compelled to sign the Covenant before landing ; and not even the universal joy that their monarch's return afforded the populace, could efface from Charles's mind the apprehensions that he was virtually a tool in the hands of the Covenanters, and that his restoration was still a thing of the future, and by no means an established fact.

The sight of Montrose's hand withering on the Aberdeen Tolbooth was not obliterated from his memory by the liberality with which that town presented him with fifteen hundred pounds, although the Estates, jealous at such liberality, sent an injunction prohibiting the other burghs from following so good an example. Though the Estates ordered the Castle guns to be fired, bonfires to be lighted, and bells to be rung in Edinburgh, and over the kingdom, in honour of Charles's safe arrival, they kept him at the Palace of Falkland, instead of bringing him to Edinburgh, and sent back again to the

Continent all the English Cavaliers who had come home with their sovereign.

The clergy continually lectured Charles from their pulpits; one of them going so far as to say that if the King did not keep the Covenant, 'it would be all over with him.'

The Engagers did all they could to propitiate the Covenanters, and in that way remain near the person of the King; but with one exception—that of the Duke of Buckingham—the Cavaliers were all banished from the royal presence, and only those attached to Argyle's faction were allowed to remain near him.

An anecdote will illustrate the King's position as regarded his followers.

The Earl of Carnwath, one of the Engagers who had accompanied Charles to England, happened one day to enter the King's privy chamber at Falkland, at the same moment that Argyle was coming into the room. Argyle with great haughtiness questioned the Earl's right to be there.

Carnwath went at once to the King, and told him how Argyle had treated him, and denounced him as proscribed by the Estates.

He took leave of Charles, hoping he would never have any one near him less devoted to his service.

'It is your going,' he cried in parting to Argyle;

'but I care not!' Scarcely had Carnwath quitted the Court, before the officials received orders to seize and hang him, but he had eluded the minions of the Puritan party, and escaped from their clutches.

The poor young King, used to the gaities of a foreign Court, deprived of his chosen friends and companions, and surrounded only by Covenanters, was miserable indeed. Argyle's son, Lord Lorne, commanded his body-guard, and all his retinue were obliged to prove that they had signed the Covenant. The King could indulge in no amusement without offending the Presbyterian clergy, and was compelled to listen to interminable sermons, and on one occasion heard six such discourses delivered without the least rest between.

The state of tyranny in which he was kept more resembled the condition of a State prisoner than that of an hereditary King among his own people, and this went on till Cromwell determined—after issuing a proclamation in which he attempted to defend his tone of action—to invade Scotland.

Cromwell endeavoured to justify his conduct, which was in direct violation of a treaty entered into with the Scots, by which he had promised not to make war on them without three months' notice, by declaring that he did so because he saw the northern kingdom bent on restoring the royal power. He

therefore mustered a large body of sixteen thousand men to invade Scotland.

The Scots—the common people especially—were dismayed when they heard of Cromwell's preparations. They dreaded to encounter the same severity that the Irish had endured, and from political motives the clergy kept up all the horror the peasantry felt at the cruelties practised on the people of Ireland.

The young King was felt to be an important element in the defence of the kingdom, as the Estates hoped through his influence to attract the scattered Cavalier party, who maintained a sullen reserve while active preparations were made throughout the kingdom to enlist an army of thirty thousand men.

To prepare for the enemy, it was necessary to entail a great deal of suffering on the inhabitants of the country lying between Berwick and the capital. For miles the land was laid waste ; crops had been destroyed by fire, and the peasantry chased from their homes, in order to prevent the possibility of their supplying food to Cromwell's soldiers.

This so far answered, that when the English soldiery entered Scotland, not a man was to be seen. The Roundheads were sorely dismayed to see the utter desolation of the country.

The English entered Scotland in July 1650, just fourteen days after Charles's arrival in that country. The Covenanters, commanded by Lord Leslie, and cautiously drawn up behind the fortifications between Berwick and the capital, awaited the enemy's coming.

The country people having fled, Cromwell issued a proclamation promising full protection to those who returned to their homes. The peasantry were, however, slow to avail themselves of his offer ; and as they had torn up all their crops, levelled their houses, and taken their goods and chattels with them, the Roundheads very soon began to experience both cold and hunger.

Bread and water rations did not make Cromwell's troops more contented, and they therefore began to murmur loudly.

Had the Covenanters acted differently, the issue might have been changed ; for when, on the twenty-ninth of July, the young King was brought down to the army, the inveterate intolerance of Argyle's party led to their insisting on expelling from their ranks all those who would not sign the Covenant. Many Cavaliers had joined the army from love of their country and a wish to unite even with their enemies in its defence, but they would not agree to the 'purgation,' as it was called, and the conse-

quence was, that many thousands of men withdrew long before Charles had joined the army at Leith. The Covenanters, secure in their own spiritual pride, declared their conviction that victory would be theirs; but, unhappily, in their very first skirmish with Cromwell, they were beaten back, and a flank fire from Leith alone checked his further advance into their territory.

Several serious skirmishes took place between Cromwell's army and the Scotch troops; and the Independents, who mainly composed the Round-heads' army, infuriated by the virulence of their adversaries, who denied them any quarter, fought with increased energy, and when successful took a number of prisoners.

Several Cavaliers were among the number, one of whom is said to have died with the proverbial oath of the Royalists, 'I'll go to my king.'

Cromwell does not appear to have behaved cruelly to the prisoners, and the peasantry began to discover that his severity was not more terrible than the tyranny of their own Government.

At one town to which Cromwell retired, to await the arrival of some vessels laden with provisions from England, he provided the starving inhabitants with corn, to the value of two hundred and forty pounds.

The Scottish Estates published proclamations, in which they represented Cromwell's retreat—a step he had taken while waiting for provisions—as the sole result of their own prowess. They even carried the deception so far as to return public thanksgiving for their victories.

But Cromwell, after recruiting his army, advanced by Colinton towards Edinburgh, pitching his tent three miles west of the capital. He was, however, compelled to again retreat, this time to Musselburgh. In order that his flank and rear might retire in safety, he selected Sunday as the day for the march; for not even in defence of their country would the Scotch fight on the Sabbath! The young King was all this time at Holyrood, where he held a semblance of a Court. Under pressure of the strongest kind, the minions of the Estates compelled him to subscribe himself a devoted Presbyterian, and in writing to abjure the acts of his father and mother, and all the maxims and traditions of his family. It was some time before Charles could bring himself to act in a way so repugnant to his feelings and principles; but he was in reality a prisoner in the hands of the Scots, and at length affixed his name to the paper, which was called, from its having been signed at that burgh, 'The Dunfermline Declaration.'

The Scots, who had been extremely depressed by their losses, were gratified at having wrung this concession from Charles, as the English general had accused them of advocating the cause of the malignants, and they hoped by this declaration to strengthen their hands by refuting Cromwell's assertions.

At length a foe far more dreadful than the Scots declared himself against the Roundheads. The English, while encamped near Colinton, had keenly felt the coldness of the climate, especially at night, and at length an illness, called 'the country disease'—probably low fever—broke out among his troops, and Cromwell was then driven to propose terms to the Scots, on condition of being allowed to retreat unmolested.

The Covenanters inferred from this that the English general's position was worse than it really was, and they resumed hostilities without entering into negotiations.

Cromwell was too great a man to be daunted by the difficulties of his situation. He withdrew his force to Dunbar, and entrenched himself there till he received reinforcements from England. His retreat was attended with all kinds of disasters, and the Scots followed him along the Lammermuir hills on one side of Dunbar.

The Scots appeared to have thoroughly surrounded Cromwell. Then, with their usual arrogant confidence, they felt sure that, hemmed up between their army and the sea, they had him completely in their power. Dunbar is situated at the extremity of a long tract of flat country, having the Firth of Forth on one side and the hills on the other. The Scots reached Doon hill, where they overlooked the English, and called a council of war to decide on what should be their line of action.

The clergy, who were numerous represented in the Covenanting army, were anxious to lose no time in annihilating the enemy ; others, more prudent, suggested a middle course, and proposed negotiations, and that Cromwell, by an unconditional surrender of arms and ammunition, should be allowed to quietly retire to England. In spite of the confidence with which they talked, they knew his great vigour and ability, and had a well-founded fear that, if pressed too hard, he might make a successful stand even at that eleventh hour. However, more impetuous counsels prevailed, and on the second of September the Scottish army lay ready to attack the Roundheads.

Cromwell reviewed his position. His influence

lay with the army, and the religious zealots of whom it was composed ; and he knew if he failed in the expedition, he would either as a prisoner in the Scots' power be called to a severe reckoning for the regicidal part he had played, or from the failure of the expedition lose his ascendancy in England. He was ensnared, and yet did not despair. He sent off all his sick to the ships on the coast, and after recommending his soldiers to pray for help, told them to 'take heart, for God had heard them, and would appear for them.'

He was lodged in Lord Roxburghe's house at Broxmouth the day before the battle ; and as he noted the Scottish army in the distance, he cried out with triumph, 'The Lord hath given them into our hands ; they are coming down to us.'

Nor had this wonderful military genius miscalculated the effects of religious enthusiasm on his troops. The Scots meanwhile were leaving their position on the hills of Lammermuir, and kept steadily descending through the slow long hours of that chill September night. Dawn beheld their long line of battle drawn up in front of Cromwell's army, thicker in one part than the other, because they anticipated that, as soon as he should be attacked, Cromwell would attempt to escape into England.

This night march was the greatest error Leslie could have committed.

Though double the number of the English, the Scottish soldiers were totally unprepared to compete with Cromwell's veteran troops, for they were wearied out with their arduous march ; their powder was damp from the night dews, and their spirits flagged from want of that refreshing rest which the Round-heads had enjoyed.

The battle began before the morning mist had rolled away, and after a long struggle victory declared itself on the side of Cromwell, who, as he saw the sun rising behind him, and marked that while his soldiers had it at their backs, it dazzled the eyes of their adversaries, he exclaimed, ' Now, let God arise, and His enemies shall be scattered ! '

The sound of his voice as he uttered these words appealed forcibly to men who believed that the war they were waging was ' the Lord's cause ; ' and with an impetuosity the wearied Scots were too tired out to resist, they fell on their enemies in every direction, and hewed them to pieces. The Scots fled ; their cavalry trampling the foot regiments as they turned from the enemy ; while in vain their clergy, the cause of all their misfortunes, implored them to stop. Their voices fell unheeded on ears only eager to flee from the sounds of their pursuers, and for

fourteen miles the English pursued the flying foe. The Sectarian troops recollected that the Scots had refused them any quarter, and therefore the clergy were the especial objects of their bloody vengeance. Those who had gone out twenty-seven thousand strong in the morning, shouting their favourite watchword, 'the Covenant !' fled from those equally presumptuous men who called themselves the 'army of the Lord of hosts !'

It is enough to record the number of prisoners taken by Cromwell, to show the importance of his victory. While the victorious chief lost only thirty men, he captured ten thousand of the Covenanters, and took their colours, ordnance, tents, and baggage. Cromwell returned thanks after the battle ; and, providing for the relief of the wounded, wrote to the House of Commons recording his victory. In a letter to his wife written the next day, he says : 'The Lord has showed us an exceeding mercy !' who can tell how great it is ? My weak faith has been upheld ; I have been miraculously supported !'

The wreck of the Covenanters' army fell back on Stirling, while Cromwell gained peaceable possession of Leith and Edinburgh, and most of that part of Scotland south and east of Falkirk.

Edinburgh Castle held out against him, and many

of the Presbyterian clergy fled for shelter into that stronghold, which Cromwell besieged.

The blow the Scots received to their pride by Cromwell's victories was not unmixed with other feelings as far as concerned the ruined, despised, and small remnant of the Cavaliers.

Charles felt that his time would come, and rightly judged that a revulsion of feeling in favour of his royal house would be the result of this exposure of Presbyterian pretensions. The tyranny of the clergy, and the arrogance with which they had vaunted of the favour of the Almighty, had proved unequal to repress the English invaders, and Charles trusted that ere long the people would see that their real friends were their ancient kings. Cromwell's aim was to reduce Scotland, as he had so recently succeeded in subjugating Ireland.

England had long submitted to the rule of the Commonwealth ; and though Cromwell was only popular with the army, he had crushed every party antagonistic to his own. He was determined to impose his own Calvinism on the Scots as well as on the English.

The army the Protector commanded was composed of religious zealots, but the rigid laws of their leader were so strictly kept that he could rely on his troops serving him with the greatest precision. The

austere morality of his troops was wonderful. The Cavaliers, accustomed to use profane language, were astonished to find that neither drunkenness nor gambling were ever seen or heard of in Cromwell's camp ; but, on the other hand, the intolerance with which the Independents regarded all sects but their own, had led them to outrage without mercy many beautiful English churches and cathedrals, declaring that they 'savoured of Popery.' The Republicans, indeed, detested a religion which they regarded as having enslaved their country.

The line of policy Cromwell and his party had apparently laid down was to conciliate, with a view to convincing, the Presbyterian clergy. Finding that many of the clergy were shut up in Edinburgh Castle, he sent up a messenger to beg them to return to their duties, promising, if they complied, to protect them. A long correspondence ensued, the Presbyterians sneering at Cromwell, and declaring that they alone were the 'favoured of the Lord !'

To this Cromwell replied, that were their assertions correct, 'the Lord would surely have stood by them during the late battles.'

A long controversy followed ; and even the Covenanters found it difficult to answer this. However, they were not to be beaten. They put the whole blame on the presence of Charles, whom they con-

sidered as responsible for all the misfortunes of their Government.

They held a solemn fast, at which they declared that the young King's 'lust for an earthly crown' had been the only cause of the reverses sustained by their arms. One preacher went so far as to say, 'that were the King's heart as upright as that of King David, God would no more pardon the sins of his father's house for his sake, than He had done those of the house of Judah for the goodness of Josiah !'

The Covenanters were too prejudiced to see that if they had joined with the Royalists when Cromwell first threatened to march into Scotland, the whole country would most probably have laid aside its differences to repel the English ; and, in fact, they so thoroughly detested the Cavaliers, that when a fusion was proposed, several of the leaders declared that they would rather join Cromwell than fight by the side of malignants.

Charles's position, in the meantime, was so irksome to him, that in October of the same year in which Cromwell had arrived in Scotland, he actually hoped to organize a rising of his own friends ; and to free himself from his jailors, he managed to escape their vigilance so far as to get away from Perth, and to bid his friends meet him in the Braes of Angus ;

but before the meeting could be organized, the Covenanters had overtaken him, and he was persuaded to give up his intention.

The Covenanters, however, then became aware that it would be wise to recognise Charles as a leader ; and after Cromwell had reduced Edinburgh Castle, they, on the first of January 1651, crowned him King of Scotland. This revolution was effected by a more moderate section of the Covenanters.

Those who carried this measure, and thus recognised the King, were called 'Resolutioners ;' those who opposed it, 'Protesters.'

There were two distinct parties from that time in Scotland, one consisting of those extreme men who, rather than admit the Royalists into the State, withdrew entirely from the Government, and the Resolutioners.

Strachan, Montrose's old enemy, headed the former party, and under his leadership it endeavoured, by raising a separate army, to recall the Scots to their allegiance to their former guides ; for it was the stricter leaders of the Covenant who became the Protesters. But Cromwell defeated Strachan's army at Hamilton, and after that battle the Protesters abandoned all pretensions to being considered a separate military party.

The King after that became the actual leader of

the Resolutioners ; but at the same time he and his followers still preserved an outward show of reverence, although the ‘malignants’—as the Covenanters called the Cavaliers—formed a large section of the army.

Cromwell's army took no active measures till the summer following the young King's coronation at Scone, to entice the Scots from their entrenchments at Stirling ; and then, seeing that as long as Charles drew his supplies from Fife, there would be no means of tempting him to risk defeat in open battle, Cromwell threw four thousand men into the country in Charles's rear, and thus intercepted his means of communicating with the rest of Scotland.

Charles's troops were defeated at Inverkeithing. Two thousand of his men were killed, and six hundred taken prisoners. The King, thus defeated in Scotland, formed a sudden resolution, and unknown to Cromwell, led the remnant of his army into England, trying to rouse that country before the Captain-General of the Scottish army, having heard of his sudden step, should be able to follow. But Cromwell, leaving General Monk in command of a small force in Scotland, quickly followed the King across the border, and overtook them at Worcester.

Charles would probably have carried everything

before him, but that the Scots deserted in large numbers as they marched along ; and the Parliament, by vigorous measures, also prevented an immense number of Cavaliers from joining the royal troops. The King's army, by the time he reached Worcester, was diminished to eleven thousand men, Cromwell's being only five thousand strong, and fatigued by their hurried march. It was the third of September ; and though the Royalists made a determined resistance, they were dispirited by recollecting that on that day year the battle of Dunbar had been lost and won. Again victory declared itself on the side of the Roundheads under Oliver Cromwell.

Charles, dragged off the field of battle at Worcester, escaped alive, and eventually got abroad. Thus the last active resistance made to the iron rule of Cromwell ended, and he at length annihilated the Scottish army, and dealt a death-blow to the Covenanters of Scotland.

The Marquis of Argyle, who had not joined Charles the Second, still held out in his own country ; but he was at last surprised, and Scotland was then reduced to submit unconditionally to England and its Republican laws.

Monk found no difficulty in keeping down the Scots during Cromwell's absence, and thenceforward, till the Restoration of the Stuarts, Scotland

was a mere province of England, subject to its laws, and, in fact, a conquered land.

Both Cavaliers and Presbyterians keenly felt the fallen condition of their country ; yet, though no doubt the loss of their national independence, for which they had fought so long and so valiantly, was a heavy misfortune, the substitution of a good for a bad Government turned out well in the end for the Scottish people.

The Presbyterian rule under the Covenant had been tyrannical and ruinous ; and when the Covenanters were divided into two parties, religious differences still ran so high, that the first session held by Cromwell's judges had, it is said, to adjudge four hundred cases, which arose solely out of private quarrels.

The Church Courts had enforced confession of sins, real and imaginary, under threats of excommunication ; and on these grounds, suits which were a complete scandal to the country were brought out of private spite.

It was an easy thing to accuse another of the crime of witchcraft ; and when the Resolutioners and Protesters could bring forward against each other nothing else, it was enough, under Covenanting rulers, to say that their enemy practised sorcery.

The crusade against witchcraft in Europe arose from two of the greatest blessings to humanity,—

printing, and the translation of the Scriptures into the vulgar tongue. To the superstitious, who believed in the actual power of sorcerers, there was nothing more comforting than to believe that to put a witch to death was not only justifiable, but pleasing to God. Protestants and Catholics were alike zealous in this cruel crusade against witches, and Luther rather encouraged than repressed the persecution, exclaiming, 'I would burn them all;' and no race of Protestants were more energetic than the Scottish Reformers in denouncing the so-called crime of witchcraft.

The ignorant peasantry were actually encouraged by Kirk-sessions to give up the names of those who were suspected of the offence; no priest daring to absolve a witch, nor any other person supposed to be self-dedicated to Satan. The fate of any one found guilty of the offence was pitious in the extreme. Their accusers were pitiless. No mercy was shown to a witch.

There was no offence, possible or impossible, of which a witch was not suspected. If the mill stopped, it was said to be bewitched. The storms at sea, the loss of fishing-boats, illness of children and animals, were all imputed to the 'evil eye.' Candlemas and Hallow-eve were said to be the annual gatherings for those practising the black art.

Witches—so the ignorant peasant believed—traversed oceans on barges of eggshells; or, mounted on goblin horses, would rendezvous at some hill-side,—

‘When the grey owlet has three times hoo’d,
When the grimy cat has three times mewed!’

Witches also practised divination, and pretended to read the secrets of the future; but at last the Church grew alarmed, and declared that sorcerers and magicians were worthy of death; and the Protestant Reformers organized and led the crusade against witchcraft.

Knox denounced witches from the pulpit, and the Kirk-sessions were constantly occupied in judging persons accused of witchcraft.

Under Cromwell’s rule, this and a great many similar abuses of justice passed away. Finding that disputes between the rival religious parties prevented the free administration of the law, the great Dictator determined to put a stop to clerical interference in Scotland.

In 1653, the Scottish Assembly was dissolved by military force under Colonel Coterell, who suddenly entered the place where the ecclesiastical body held its sittings.

Surrounding the house with troops, the officer entered with some soldiers, and demanded by

whose authority they were sitting there to deliberate.

‘By no earthly authority,’ replied the Moderator, ‘but by the will of Christ, and to promote His interest on earth.’

Coterell, acting under Cromwell’s order, mounted a bench, and declared the Assembly dissolved, because it had no authority from the English Parliament.

The Covenanters could scarcely believe the evidence of their senses; but the English officer told them to be gone, or he would order the soldiers to disperse them.

When at length they got up and prepared to disperse, Colonel Coterell led them out of the town, and warned them to at once leave Edinburgh, and no longer agitate their distracted country. The Assembly was forbidden to meet again, under any pretence whatsoever, in larger numbers than three at a time; and thus ended the representation of a factious religious body, which for sixteen years had agitated, oppressed, and burdened Scotland with wars, both at home and abroad.

Scotland enjoyed a peaceful time under Cromwell’s rule; and released from an overbearing priesthood, that state of things went on till Charles the Second’s restoration in 1660.

This concluding chapter has been thought necessary as a sequel to the romantic life and adventures of Montrose.

When at length the Stuarts were recalled to England, and the iron rule of Cromwell was over, the young King disappointed many of the Cavalier families, who had shared in his exile and sufferings, and been true to him in the hours of danger and penury; but he does not appear to have been ungrateful to the memory of Montrose. In January 1661, he ordered the remains of the great Marquis to be disinterred, and accorded to all that was mortal of the hero a stately funeral.

Strange to say, the very day upon which the funeral of Montrose was solemnized, Argyle, then a prisoner in Edinburgh Castle, was aroused—as Montrose had been on the morning of his execution—by the sounds of fifes, drums, and trumpets.

His inquiry was answered by the attendants telling him that it was the procession starting for the Boroughmuir to bring his rival's body. Strange contrast to that bygone May day 1650!

These honours were but scant justice to the memory of one who had served the King's house so devotedly; and as long as history records the lives of great and good men, Montrose will ever be

remembered as noble and true, as well as great. In St. Giles's Church his body rests till—

‘The day when he shall show them,
At the throne of God on high,
The murderer and the murdered,
Met before their Judge's eye!’

It has been difficult, in holding up to admiration the character of Montrose, to avoid too great a bias against the party who put him to a cruel death, and denied him a fair trial; but it must not be forgotten that the struggle for religious independence in Scotland, and for the maintenance of the Covenant, was originally a good one, and would have never degenerated into secular factions and tyranny, but for the gross intolerance of those who, detesting the errors of Popery and the follies of a profligate age, degraded the cause they sought to uphold by injustice, disloyalty, and deliberate cruelty. That the reprisals of the Royalist party were severe and persecuting, none can deny; for there is a dark history to be told in the annals of a later reign of hunted Covenanters, who bore their sufferings with the noble endurance of martyrs. When civil war became rebellion, the royal prerogative was often abused; and as we read of cruelties practised on Scottish peasants, because they adhered to the

Covenant, we feel that we ought to rejoice that those terrible times are past and gone, and that we live in happier days than those of the gallant Cavalier Montrose.



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